

A M A S S I S

KING of EGYPT.

A

T R A G E D Y.

As it was to have been acted at the

THEATRE ROYAL

IN

COVENT-GARDEN.

---

By CHARLES MARSH.

---

I. *Fuge, sed Poteras tutior esse Domi.*

MART.

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L O N D O N:

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M. DCCXXXVIII.

# Dramatis Personæ

## M E N.

*Amasis*, King of Egypt.  
*Pjanuynutu* Prince.  
*Arbaces*, a General, Nephew to the King.  
*Arbaces*, an Egyptian Nobleman.

*Pbene* { two Courtiers.  
*Sparta* { two Officers in the Egyptian Army.

*A Ruffian.*

## W O M E N.

*Mariana* { a young Lady, secretly married to the  
*Prince*.  
*Iras*, her attendant.

Guards, &c.

SCENE *Memphis in old Egypt.*

# A M A S I S

## KING of EGYPT.

### A C T . II.

#### S C E N E I.

*The royal Palace at Memphis,*

*Enter Phanes and Sethon.*

#### P H A N E S.

ONCE more, my friend, Egypt's intrepid sons  
Exert the valour of their great forefathers,  
And prove themselves descendants of the Gods.

Again the genius of our Land revives,  
Lifting her head victorious o'er our foes;

Th

The hardy *Libyan*, and the jetty *Ethiop*,  
Have felt the terror of our vengeful arms,  
Like thunder pouring from the hands of *Jove*.

*Setb.* Nor shall the *Persian*, with a victor's pride,  
Insult us more ; Fortune, that plum'd her wings,  
And perch'd herself on *Cyrus'* golden crest,  
With double welcome, since that hero's death,  
Returns to *Amasis*, the first of kings. —

*Asammenitus* has of the enemy

Lest twice ten thousand for a prey to Vultures.

*Pba.* Their deity, the ever glorious sun,  
Henceforth shall, blushing, veil his sacred head,  
Nor view the left'ning glory of his vot'ries.  
To-day the prince, with living laurel crown'd,  
Comes to receive, from his illustrious sire,  
The welcome due to such a god-like son.

*Setb.* He does, my friend, yet, tho' the noble  
youth

Has ever trod in the bright paths of honour,  
His father's heart seems from him quite estrang'd ;  
His fond, paternal love, has had its date,  
And, in its room, inglorious passions reign.

*Pba.* *Psammenitus* had once his father's soul ;  
He liv'd not, but in gazing on the boy ! —  
When, from the war, triumphant he has come,  
In his fond arms,  
He'd, with the extacy of lovers, clasp him ;  
Hear him describe the dangers he had 'scap'd,  
The glorious toils and hazards of the war,  
And dwell, with pleasure, on his honour'd scars.  
Then — in a rapture would he bless the gods  
Who gave him such a hero in a son.

*Setb.* But, as infirmity belongs to man,  
So the most perfect sometimes blindly tread  
The maze of error.

*Pba.* The gods place kings as their vicegerents  
here ;  
And bid them rule, their proxies for this world ;  
Nor can they ever delegate the trust  
Of sacred empire in a worthier hand :

He is a prince whom heav'n must highly favour,  
Most merciful, beneficent, and good.

*Sete.* True, *Phanes*, he is all that's great and royal!

Yet, shall I speak? there is that stains his glory,  
That bows the hero, and subdues his soul:  
Caught in the snare of beauty; tho' he struggles  
Like a hurt lion taken in the toils.

Still the transcendent charms of *Miriana*,  
Superior, even to the voice of honour'd  
Hold him in secret chains, twine round his heart,  
And of a monarch make a doating slave;  
Else, had his tow'ring virtue reach'd the skies,  
And claim'd its kindred to divinity.

*Pha Setbon*, observe the envy of their stars;  
The Prince too doats on this illustrious charmer,  
And basks him in the sunshine of her smiles!  
Father and son! both in her snares are caught;  
Both wear the chains of this imperial beauty.

*Seth.* Sure, by the haughty stride, that shou'd be  
*Mordian*,  
The nephew of the king——he moves this way,  
But in gloomy thought. ——I know not  
why,

His presence irks my sight——within his mind  
The latent seeds of hot ambition lye;  
And make him to a throne a dangerous kinsman,  
Let us avoid him, *Phanes*. Honest eyes  
But ill can brook to meet dissimulation.

(*Exunt.*)



— S C E N E



## SCENE II.

Mardian alone.

With victory return'd ! — the *Perfians* beat ! —  
 And does he here in triumph wing his way ? —  
 He does — he comes — fwell'd with his full-blown  
 honours.  
 Curse on the stars that light him thus to glory ! —  
 This prince — the young *Psimmenitus*, this fav'rite  
 Of those who rule above — But to my peace  
 A mortal foe ; — the bane of my ambition.  
 He's now the soldier's idol, *Egypt*'s hope :  
 What then am I ? — do not these veins contain  
 The same rich blood that circles in the king's ?  
 Tho' but a bastard scion of his stem :  
 Tho' mark'd with infamy, and quite despoil'd  
 Of that inherent right, which infant nature,  
 In her first, uncorrupted state, allow'd  
 To all : yet the ethereal energy,  
 The actuating principle that moves  
 The soul to god like acts — that thirst of sway  
 Which was implanted in me at my birth,  
 Has not forsook me. No. I feel the heat,  
 The particle divine ; it rages in me,  
 And only boundless greatness can appease it !

SCENE



SCENE III.

Mardian, Arbaces.

*Mardian.*

Well, my *Arbaces*.—Is the prince arriv'd?

*Arb.* He's now, my lord, amid'st th' acclaiming  
croud,

Ent'ring, in martial pomp, our *Memphis* streets.

The swarming populace, so closely press,

They choak the passage of the victor's car.

*Mard.* And wherefore do you shun this happy  
sight?

Which all men's eyes are greedy to behold!

*Arb.* Let the unthinking herd, with lavish praise  
Adore their minion, and engross his smiles:  
I cannot meanly fawn, nor bend the knee,  
When the essential part, my heart, is absent.  
But, I have said enough—perhaps—too much.

*Mard.* Nay—on:

By great *Osyris*, I'm already charm'd!

The prince—

*Arb.* Grows deadly—

*Mard.* To your hopes and mine—

*Arb.* Mine he has kill'd already—

*Mard.* Speak your grief—

Sorrows imparted to a tender friend,  
At least are lessen'd, if not quite redress'd.

*Arb.* 'Tis needless to inform you of the hatred  
Which, from our infancy, has still been nurs'd  
Twixt me and *Phocas*—my detested rival,

*Sofocles*

Suffice it now to say—— *Mandane's* lost !  
 By Prince *Psammenitus'* despotic will  
 Bestow'd, on this curst fav'rite, this new minion !  
 Her vows, that once were mine, by him are  
 claim'd ;

He clasps her now—— which to his glowing breast  
 The beauteous maid yields all that hoard of joys  
 Which I had fondly treasur'd up as mine :  
 And shall I tamely bear it, sit down calmly,  
 And 'bide with patience under such an injury ?  
 No—— I disclaim all loyalty and love ;  
 Irrevocable hate—— revenge, and spight,  
 Come to my aid :—henceforth possets my soul,  
 That I may throw with treble retribution,  
 On the offender's head—this mortal pang !

*Mard.* There spoke indeed the man— here let us  
 join ;

Like two bold hunters, we'll unite our toils,  
 Nor shall the lion, or the whelp escape.

*Arb.* I am your creature, ever, my good lord ;  
 Your father, my late royal master, rais'd me :  
 To you devoted, my remains of life,  
 From this fixt *Æra*, shall be wholly yours.  
 Propose the means—I have a heart and hand  
 Shall never stop, while there's revenge in view.

*Mard.* Hear then ; the prince, presuming on a  
 friendship,  
 Has long been kept inviolate betwixt us,  
 Left to my charge, *Aulete's* beauteous daughter,  
 Adjuring me to keep her from the eyes  
 Of the enamour'd king : he trusts me too,  
 Calls me his friend, and hugs me in his bosom ;  
 Thinking the favours he has lavish'd on me,  
 Are ample recompence for loss of empire.  
 Thus have I means to ruin both at once,  
 Yet neither think me false——

*Arb.* Still may they sleep——  
 Still lull themselves in their own fancy'd safety,  
 Till th' unseen hand of fate shall draw the curtain,  
 And waiting ruin shall devour them both.

But,

But, *Mardian*, say, how did the king relapse ?  
 'Twas said, he had resign'd her to his son.

*Mard.* One day, 'twas when the sun was mounted high,

And, from his zenith, shot his servid rays  
 With his meridian strength—the love sick maid,  
 To avoid the heat, had gain'd a jesa'mine bow'r :  
 The springing flow'rs (the emblem of her beauty)  
 Seem to rejoice at such a charming guest !

Pensive she sat upon a verdant seat,  
 Her languid head reclin'd upon her hand ;  
 Her robes were by officious zephyrs fann'd,  
 And gently blown aside ; when to the view,  
 Her bosom rose, lifted by heaving sighs ;  
 Her warmest wishes then were sent abroad,  
 And made her cheeks with deep vermillion glow :  
 All that the poets fable of their *Venus*,  
 Ev'n when the raptur'd fancy highest soars,  
 Comes short of what she seem'd ! the am'rous me-  
 'narch,

As fortune led his steps, came by that way,  
 Struck with th' enchanting sight—— speechless he  
 gaz'd,

Devouring with his eyes that world of beauty !  
 As he approach'd her — the affrighted maid  
 Precipitately fled—like a young bounding roe,  
 That scuds it o'er the lawns to 'scape the hunter ;  
 So did she fly confus'd—and left the king  
 Plung'd o'er—quite lost in the vast gulph of love.

*Arb.* How will his warring passions tear his soul,  
 When he beholds the young victorious prince  
 Claiming his sacred promise——

*Mard.* True. *Arbaces*——

Already he begins to curse his birth,  
 Wishes he could behold him a dead coarse,  
 Stretch'd at his feet, rather than thus triumphant.  
 That self-tormenting scorpion, jealousy,  
 Prays on his vitals, and devours his heart,  
 Deforming the great image of the gods.  
 Yet let the impending storm break where it will,

Still it must make for us—while we, secure,  
 Watching the moment, when their genii nod,  
 Will catch them then, and drag them to perdition.  
 But I must hence, by this the king expects me,  
 With well-dissembl'd duty will I meet him.  
 Who covers deep designs, shou'd have the art,  
 To make the face look different from the heart.

(*Exeunt.*



#### SCENE IV.

*A private apartment in the palace. Mariana is discover'd sitting in a melancholy posture. Iras attending. Soft musick.*

*After the musick, she rises and speaks.*

*Mir.* In vain these soothing sounds of joy salute  
 me;

In vain does musick lend its sprightly aid !  
 All powerful harmony, that can assuage,  
 And calm the sorrows of the frenzy'd wretch,  
 Till lull'd with thy enchanting, grateful numbers,  
 He throws quite off the burthen that oppres'd him.  
 On me thy force is lost. Insensible to joy,  
 Mourning and discontent sit heavy on me.

*Iras.* Still, still, my royal mistress, will you  
 cherish

This pining anguish, that destroys your peace,  
 And preys upon your life ? desponding looks,  
 And eyes that stream with tears, are fit companions  
 For misery and despair —————

*Mir.* This is their mansion ?

Here, in this heart, they've ta'en up their abode,

And

And, oh, I fear, will dwell with me for ever,  
 What is't to me, this splendid pomp of woe,  
 This pageantry of greatness, that but swells  
 And more augments my grief ? princess of *Egypt* !  
 And yet I am forelorn—distress and sorrow  
 Are rooted in my soul.

*Iras.* Why should they dwell  
 Where innocence and goodness sit inthron'd  
 In all their native lustre ?—let me beg you——

*Mir.* What would'st thou fay ? have I the joy of  
 brides ?  
 Have these desiring eyes beheld their lord,  
 Ev'n from that moment, when the holy priest  
 Pronounc'd us one ?

*Iras.* Not seen him since you wedded ?——

*Mir.* Scarce was the holy ceremony ended,  
 When the harsh trumpet call'd him to the field.  
 'Twas on that morning, when the king commanded  
*Psammenitus*, as general, shoud succeed  
 My warlike father, privately he came  
 To take his farewell, e'er he went to battle.  
 Gods ! what divinity then shone around him  
 How did he look ! majestick, all commanding,  
 Awful as *Maos* ! — yet, love had kindly mixt.  
 And blended in his mien, the soothing sweetnesse  
 Of the fair *Cyprian* queen. With sighs and vows,  
 With all the tender eloquence of love,  
 He begg'd me to reward his faithful flame,  
 That he might call me his —— however fortune  
 Dispos'd of him in fight——

*Iras.* You yielded then——

*Mir.* Could I refuse, there to bestow my hand,  
 Where my fond heart already had summ'd up  
 All that the bounty of the gods could give ?  
 The woman's nice ness had been then in vain :  
 That hour united us—— the sacred rites  
 In secret were perform'd, and I was rais'd  
 To the illustrious rank of *Egypt's* princess.

*Iras.* Why then these tears ? — pardon your  
 faithful slave,

*Pſammenitus* is noble—

*Mir.* Oh, he's god-like !

Heav'n form'd him sure, a pattern for mankind ;

The pride of his own sex, and wish of ours !

Yes, I were bleſt, did not the faithleſs king,

In violation of his royal promise,

Still persecute me with his guilty paſſion :

In this retreat, where I have chose with thee

To live reclus'd, and hidden from the world,

To mourn the irksome absence of my husband ;

Each day he comes, and haunts me with his love ;

Thinking to charm me with the pompous sounds

Of grandeur, power, and all that can invite,

Or elevate the thoughts of the ambitious :

But, 'tis in vain ; for heav'n that sees the soul,

And knows the ſecret ſprings of all our actions,

Must bear me witness, 'twas the virutes only

Of my *Pſammenitus* that gain'd my love.

Well cou'd I bear disgrace and poverty,

The loss of what the fortunate call blessings,

Riches and honour, all the golden train

That wait obsequious on the proud and great :

I could forego it all for him—for him

Whom I have chose the partner of my heart,

Thro' all the various ſcenes that chequer life.

*Iras.* The gods, who're ever friendly to the vir-tuous,

Will yet point out ſome way to make you happy

Each moment brings *Pſammenitus* ſtill nearer ;

His presence will diſp:re the beating ſurges

That, gathering to a ſtorm, now vex your peace,

And bring you to the havoc of repoſe.

*Mir.* Methinks, indeed, the mention of that name  
Shou'd make my heart exult and bound with tran-  
ſport ;

But yet this gloom that hangs upon my ſoul,

This inward loathing, not to be expref'd,

Checks all my rising raptures, damps each thought

That tends to joy—Oh, thou reſplendent goddess !

That chaste Diana, that protects thy votaries,

To

To whom my virgin vows were ever paid !  
 Why did I leave your safe and flow'ry paths,  
 Where peace of mind and sweet contentment dwell,  
 To tread the thorny labyrinths of love ?

*Iras.* Trust still in heaven, the victorious prince  
 May find some moment to disclose your marriage ;  
 And *Amasis*, returning yet to virtue,  
 Shall heap paternal blessings, in reward  
 For all the hero's suff'rings.

*Mir.* Ye blest pow'rs !  
 Extinguish in his breast that fatal flame,  
 And bring him back to honour — Ha ! he's here !  
 Down rising thoughts — descend e'en to the centre,  
 That I may put a foreign 'semblance on,  
 Lest his too piercing eyes pervade, and search  
 The secrets of my soul.



## S C E N E V.

*Amasis, Mariana, Mardian, Iras.*

*Ama.* Mardian, no more ! — I tell, thee I have  
 try'd

The utmost strength of vain philosophy,  
 The moral reasonings of the wisest sages,  
 All that the schools of *Athens* ever taught :  
 What are they, when oppos'd to beauty's pow'r ?  
 Her lov'd idea's blended with my soul ;  
 And what shall raze it thence ? sooner the *Nile*,  
 When, with impetuous force, he breaks his banks,  
 And in his dreadful march bears all before him,  
 Shall be turn'd backward by this single hand !

*Mar.* Be still my heart, what mean thy dread  
 alarms. (afides)

*Ama.* Hail *Miriana* ! hail angelick maid !  
 How shall I speak, how tell thy wond'rous worth ?  
 With lavish hands the gods have shour'd on thee  
 Their choicest gifts, form'd thee divinely fair,  
 And mark'd thee out for their peculiar fav'rite.  
 Behold, I lay my scepter at your feet,  
 Thou'rt Egypt's queen—Nay, start not *Miriana*,  
 Nor think this a short sally of wild transport ;  
 Thy virtues add a brightness to my throne,  
 And make its glories blaze with greater splendor.

*Mir.* My lord ! —

*Ama.* Why dost thou, blushing turn away  
 Thy eyes ? — let the ill judging world repine,  
 And envy thy superior excellence  
 You merit more, my fair, than can this globe,  
 With all its pompous honours, e'er below.

*Mir.* Strive not, great sir, to ruin my repose ;  
 My humble fate ne'er meant me for a crown ;  
 Nor did my soul e'er swell with such ambition ;  
 I am unworthy of your least regard.

*Ama.* Unworthy ! where then shall we find per-  
 fection ?

The characters of heav'n are fairly wrote,  
 On thy bright form ! the purity of angels !  
 Most steadfast truth, and never-ending joys  
 Blest peace, with its fair train of happiness !  
 All—all, are found in thee !

*Mir.* My worth's so small,  
 That this exaggerating praise upbraids me ;  
 And spreads this crimson o'er my glowing cheeks  
 Survey, my lord, ten thousand various beauties  
 That shine in *Asia* ; and then fix your choice  
 On some illustrious maid, whose thirst for rule,  
 And parity of birth, may dignify,  
 And to a diadem add lasting honours,  
 The shining glories of a crown wou'd fade,  
 And lose their lustre, were it plac'd on me.  
 Wou'd heav'n but be indulgent, prove propitious,  
 All that I ask, is blest serenity.

In peaceful solitude to pass my days,  
Obscure, and unregarded ; not to raise  
A pile (from flatt'ring man) of momentary praise.

## S C E N E VI.

Amafis, Mardian.

*Ama.* Confusion ! to my face am I despis'd ?  
Have I, whose stubborn soul yet never knew  
To cringe and bend, have I descended thus,  
To be resus'd? —— perdition blast her beauties !

*Mard.* How thin are the disguises we put on,  
To hide th' impassion'd frailties of our souls ?  
When the prince comes, in other terms she'll speak,  
Unfold to him the language of the heart.

*Ama.* Ha ! — thou hast read aright the subtle  
maid.  
On me she turns an eye of fierce disdain,  
But, to another, gives her very soul,  
Another ! who? — who durst aspire so high,  
Or e'en in thought presume to rival me ?  
My son ! hence, struggling nature, all thy calls  
Are lost, in the wild tempest of my passion :  
*Psummenitus*, thou art disclaim'd for ever.  
Thou innate Enemy to my repose !

(Shouts at a distance.)

*Mard.* These shouts proclaim him at the palace  
gates.

*Arbaces,* sure, will mark the lucky moment. (aside.)

*Ama.* Comes he in triumph too ? ambitious boy !  
That, like an unledg'd eagle, longs to soar,  
E'er his young pinions can sustain his weight.

S C E N E



## SCENE VII.

Amasis, Mardian, Arbaces.

*Am. Arbaces!* — Well! —*Arb. Hail to your majesty!* —

*Psammenitus*, with solemn pomp, is come.  
 Adorn'd with all the ensigns of a conq'ror ;  
 Borne at the head of his exulting soldiers,  
 Who rob the palm and olive of their branches,  
 To strew the way, and make our streets a grove.  
 Applauding *Memphis* grateful greets his presence.  
 Fixt to his car, in glist'ring fetters bound,  
 Ten captives (in whose veins the richest blood  
 Of *Perseus* runs) in abject state are seen.  
 Th' admiring crowd, gaze 'till the beamy orbs  
 Of sight are almost crack'd ; shouts rend the air,  
 As when great *Iiss*, thro' the *Aether* pours  
 Tremendous peals of thunder.

*Am. Have you done?*

Or mean you to fall down and worship this new  
 God?

This idol of the changling populace !  
 In love, and war, superior far to me. —  
 But I will be my self — exert the king ;  
 And put on all my majesty to meet him.

(Exit Amasis)

SCENE



## SCENE VIII.

Mardian, 'Arbaces.

*Mar.* So—thus far all goes well — now let it work !

This double jealousy of love and pow'r,  
Either of which would set a world in flames,  
Must in destruction end ! —

*Arb.* Mark'd you his front ?

The hostile frown, that on his visage sat,  
Declar'd the fury which he felt within.

*Mard.* It did. But e'er to morrow's sun shall set,  
That fury shall burst forth, like those eruptions.

Which *Etna*, or *Visuvius* vomit out,  
And scatter death and ruin, where it flies.

What ! tho' my father, without priestly form,  
Inswa'd his god-like soul into my mother :

And I am but the produce of stoll'n joys,  
When vigorous nature prompted them to love !

My spirit ! — that aspiring heavenly spark !

Struck out from *Jove* to lighten up this clay,  
Wou'd soar aloft — beyond the vulgar ken !

In her imperial seat look down on mea,  
As the strong eagle mounts, and scorns the distant wren.

*The End of the first ACT.*



## A C T II. S C E N E I.

S C E N E An Anticbamber.

Psammenitus, Cephrenus, Armenon.

Psammenitus.

 Immortal *Iiss*, and thou great *Osiris*,  
Accept, ye tutelary gods of *Egypt*,  
As incense, these our tributary thanks !  
At length destruction ceases. Murd'rous  
war

Has glutted quite its fell companion death,  
Nor shall he more, with undistinguish'd rage  
Sweep to one common grave the great and vulgar.  
O, my brave friends ! partakers of my dangers ;  
How shall I testify the grateful sense  
My soul conceives of such exalted words ?  
But kings, like gods, diffusive of their blessings,  
When merit claims, with open hands rewards ;  
My father then, great *Amasis*, shall thank you.

*Ceph.* 'Tis to *Psammenitus* we owe our conquest :  
The exemplary valour of our prince  
Chear'd the desponding soldier, gave new ardor,  
And kindled in his soul a thirst for glory.

*Arm.* Who wou'd not follow where his gen'ral  
leads ?  
Shou'd death, with all his ghastly train, appear  
To stoo the passage, such illustrious courage  
Wou'd sure inspire e'en sloth and cowardice.

And

And teach them to be daring.

*Psam.* Soft, my friends.  
Flattery but ill becomes a soldier's mouth ;  
Leave we the practice of those meaner arts  
To smooth-tongue statesmen, and betraying cour-  
tiers.



## SCENE II.

*Psammenitus, Mardian, Cephrenus, Armenon.*

*Psam.* My friend ! my *Mardian* ! my soul's other  
part !  
The sight of thee must surely be auspicious ;  
To meet my friend the moment I arrive  
Foretells the happiness that heav'n designs me.

*Mard.* Here let me kneel—— here, by the  
great *Osiris*,  
Swear faith, and friendship, to my princely kins-  
man :  
The joy to see you thus with victory crown'd,  
Exceed the pow'r of speech.

*Psam.* Let this—— and this—— [embracing]  
Witness, how I esteem and love such virtue.  
But see, the door unfolds, duty be first obey'd,  
Then love and *Miriana* wholly claim me.

SCENE



## SCENE III.

*Opens and discovers Amasis on his throne. Psammenitus, Mardian, Arbaces, Cephrenus, Armenon, Phanes, Sethon, and Attendants. The Prince bows to the King at a distance.*

*Ama.* Psammenitus, your conquest, wing'd by afme,  
Has reach'd our ears : with wonder we observe,  
Where e'er you pass, the idolizing croud  
Behold you as their guardian deity,  
Stile you invincible, their great protector :  
The pillar that supports our royal fabrick,  
Which else wou'd fall, and moulder into ruin.

*Psam.* If I have any virtue, if kind heav'n  
Has blest with victory my youthful arms,  
And crown'd me with the spoils of p ostrate foes,  
'Tis all my father's : in his glorious cause  
Still shall my sword be drawn, my blood be shed.  
You fir'd my breast with emulating ardor.  
Train'd me to martial acts, taught me, when young,  
To bend the stubborn bow, and hurl the javelin ;  
Early you plac'd me in the foremost rank,  
And bid me, in the fury of the fight,  
Maintain that post, or die.

*Ama.* But now, my hero,  
You bear the palm from all competitors.  
My glories disappear, when thou'rt in sight :  
As the faint twylight of the glimm'ring morn  
Is lost amid the blaze of fuller day.

*Psam.* If e'er my soul was fond of vain applause,  
Or swell'd with praises from th'unthinking vulgar,  
Usurp'd an honour from my royal sire ;

Judge

Judge me, ye gods! and let me sink before him:  
For you, my king and father, have I sought;  
For you I conquer'd,

*Ama.* For yourself you triumph'd;  
Elated wsh your conquest, you forget  
Your duty to your king— Ungrateful boy !  
You, like young *Jove* on *Ida*'s airy top,  
Attract the eyes of the admiring throng,  
Whilst I, like *Saturn*, am left quite regardles.  
Deserted, and forlorn.

*Psam.* Oh, sacred sir, (kneeling.)  
Thus at your feet I bend and lay my lawreis.  
Let me not rise, ye all avenging powers !  
Transfix me here your monument of wrath !  
On me, prove all your thunder, if a thought  
E'er rose within me, but of utmost rev'rence,  
And dutious veneration for my father.  
Some busy villain, some unknown, curs'd traitor,  
Has sure traduc'd me to the royal ear.  
Oh ! that my sword cou'd find him, that shou'd  
prove  
The filial piety of wrong'd *Psammenitus*.

*Ama.* Prince, this bold license of presuming  
youth,  
But more offends us In our presence this ?—  
By *Jove*, if I not rouse me, this proud boy,  
E'er long, will strip me of my majesty !—  
Of all my honours, and quite leave me bare,  
The blank of royalty !—why, with what pomp  
Did our *Egyptians* meet him as he pass'd ?  
Proclaim'd him their deliverer ?—to the skies  
Ten thousand voices, all at once, arose,  
With adulating sounds, to mouth his praises !  
As he had been *Alcides*, or the god  
Who guides the fiery car, great *Mars* himself ?

*Psam.* Where shall the innocent now fly for shel-  
ter ?

Since in the royal breast there is no justice !

Oh king ! oh father ! by those sacred names

I beg you take—take from this wretched prince

His

His hated life—since I no more behold  
The dear paternal smile that wont to bless me :  
Since I offend you, cut me from the earth :  
Are these the triumphs of *Psammenitus* ?  
Oh ! fatal conquest ? mournful victory of  
Fame, glory, empire, all th' aspiring hopes,  
The blooming pleasures that shou'd crown my  
youth,

Are blasted quite; my laurels are all wither'd!  
Nor shall the prince of Egypt wear 'em more.

*Ama.* Woud'st thou acquit thee of the imputation,  
And prove th'oodience which you so much boast,  
Be this !be rest, the touchstone of thy duty,  
Resign the rich, th'inestimable gem,  
The treasure my fond soul has long desir'd :  
For, mark me, prince, I'd reign too in my turn:  
Fair *Miriana* is the crown I prize,  
To her lift not up thy forbidden eyes.  
Her smile is fame, ambition, and renown,  
Nor can an empire gain'd, compensate for her  
frown. *(Exit. Amasis and attendant s.*

SCEFA IV.

### Pfammenitus, Mardian.

*Psam.* Am I awake? or is't a vision all? —  
Oh, *Mardian*, aid me, help me to support  
The thoughts that tear within, and tear my brain.  
Resign her, give her up! forsake my love!  
Oh tyrant duty! what dost thou demand?  
Can it then be? and is the sacred word,  
Of kings, no more than blasts of common air?  
If so, all truth is banish'd from the earth;  
Back to her native sky she has retir'd;  
And only stern oppression reigns below.

Meroë

Mard. Think not so deeply on't, my lord, 'twas  
but

A whirl, perhaps a sudden gust of passion,  
Which reason, the next moment, may o'er rule.

Psam. Not think on't! — do I think? — do I,  
or live,  
Or speak! — or am I stunn'd, quite senseless  
grown,  
Crush'd with the mortal weight that's thrown upon  
me?

Ah! — wou'd I were! — these pangs — the  
agonies,

The piercing throes of soul I now endure,  
Would then be over! — but, while thought re-  
mains,

While the imagination still presents  
Such images, my woes will make me feel 'em,

Mard. To see you thus, my prince, is death to  
Mardian.

Compose yourself — the king, you know, is god-  
like.

Good, to a vast profusion; he extends  
His justice to the meanest of his slaves,  
What then is owing to Psammeitus?

Psam. The king! — where is he? why hast  
thou disturb'd me! [Starting.]  
I wou'd have dos'd out life — you wake my  
mem'ry,

And bring me back again to sense and pain! —  
Has he not us'd a brutal violence? —

Perhaps compell'd her? — drag'd her to his bed?  
Methinks my busy soul now seems the scene:

I see him now, th'imperial lawless tyrant;  
Oh royal ruffian! in her ambient hair  
His hand fast lockt, he grasps my helpless love;  
With strong convulsive pangs, in vain she strives,  
In vain on me she calls — help — help, Psammeitus:  
Your wife — your virgin bride, is quite despoil'd;  
He, who shou'd guard her innocence, has stain'd it!  
Undone! — abandon'd! — ruin'd, and forlorn! —

Oh,

Oh, I can bear no more ; my brain will burst !  
My veins, my heart, my arteries, are on fire !  
Gods, give me madness to allay the torture ! —

*Mard.* His wife, blest chance ! I shall improve  
that secret. (aside.)

*Forbear, my prince* — what means these exclama-  
tions ?

The princess, arm'd with virtue, is secure ;  
Heav'n still protects its constant votaries.

*Psam.* Whence these presages ? these unwonted  
shudd'nings ?

Such bodings are not fancie d' mag'ries :

A more than woman's fear invades my heart.  
Remember, *Mardian*, to your care I gave her ;

Charg'd you to keep her from my father's sight.

If thou hast dar'd to break the laws of friendship,  
And laid her beauties as a snare to catch him,  
Think on the horrors that await thy crime !

Spectres shal! haunt and fright thy guilty soul,  
And make thee curse thy being, curse the light !  
Blaspheme the gods, and pull perdition down  
Swist on thy traytor's head !

Nay, when thou shalt descend to those dark regions,  
Where howling fiends are held in penal chains,  
And mix thee with the manes of the damn'd,  
E'en there thou shalt be branded for thy sin ;  
Since none can equal thy stupendous vileness !

*Mard.* Is this the due return my foolish love  
Has merited ? — to stand suspected thus ?  
But 'tis most just — henceforth I shall be wary  
How I contract a friendship with th'ungrateful !

*Psam.* Stay, *Mardian*, stay — I yet would think  
thee honest : (going.)

Our infant years were spent in love together ;  
Our sympathising souls were still united ;  
Have we not been the mirror to each other,  
Whose bright reflection has expos'd to view,  
The most minute conceptions of our hearts ?

*Mard.* It grieves me that my prince should have a  
doubt

Of Mordian's firm, unalterable faith.

P'sam. I'll think no more on't —— it brings chaos  
o'er me.

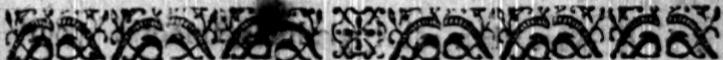
To love and Mariana will I fly;

To extacies too fierce to be describ'd !

There will I lose this sorrow that surrounds me,

And, like blest martyrs, broken with their suff'rings,

Retire to heav'n, and to eternal rest. (Exit)



## SCENE V.

Mardian.

Mard. And into sleep thou goest —— be it  
eternal !

Perdition on thy head ! — thou honest fool !

Think'st thou, the wise, like thee —— lay bare  
their souls

To ev'ry new protestor ? — oh what easy dolts

These knotty heroes are ! — a vow of friendship,

A formal face, and looks of seeming honesty

Catch the unthinking wretches in a moment,

Repose in me ! — ha — ha — dream on, be lulld !

Nor feel the bosom'd snake, till it has stung you.

Marry'd he is. — The secret too is mine,

Doubt not, but I'll employ it to advantage.

C

SCENE



## SCENE VI.

Mardian, Arbaces.

*Arb.* A more than usual gladness smooths your  
brew ;  
And I may think, with reason, you're pleas'd  
At something unexpected.

*Mard.* Wou'd you think it ? —  
This hot brain'd hero — this young am'rous fool  
Has sacrific'd his fame, his idol, glory ;  
All his whole hoard of honour, to a woman.  
True, she is fair, the fairest of her sex !  
But to pronounce him wretched all at once,  
He's wedded !

*Arb.* Wedded ! ha ! — to *Mariana* ! —  
May pestilential blasts — contagious fogs,  
Damper man'ster obscur'd the face of day,  
For ever quench their hymeneal torch. —

*Mard.* Most glorious thought ! 'twill be a master-  
piece !  
Yes — 'twill be vengeance rising to my hatred !  
What, if at night, when fond *Psammenitus*  
Expects to fate his soul with full fruition  
Of yet untasted bliss, we then cou'd substitute  
King *Anassis* ? — send him to fill those arms ?  
Which yet, no doubt, are strangers to 'em both.

*Arb.* Wide-spreading ruin — misery, resu'd  
Beyond the practice of malicious demons,  
Must be the consequence. The vast idea  
Swells me to more than mortal — great revenge,  
That cries so loud within me, thy demands

'Shall

Shall all be answer'd ! — yes, *Psammenitus*,  
 Like mine, thy heart shall know most deep despair ;  
 The pang that follows disappointed love.  
 Still doat like me, and be a wretch for ever

*Mard.* Have you yet heard, *Arbaces*, of the fate  
 Of those brave *Perians*, whom the chace of war  
 Made captives to the prince ?

*Arb.* In a close dungeon,  
 Whose horrid womb the emblem is of hell,  
 Loaded with gauling chains, they mourn their fate.  
*Nitas*, who keeps them, is my well-try'd friend.  
 'Tis true, he dresses up his face in smiles ;  
 Yet well I know, upon a late affront  
 The King has offer'd him, within his breast  
 His anger smother'd lies ; and only waits  
 A season that may help him to discharge it.

*Mard.* 'Tis well —— we'll shape the time, my  
 friend, lik *Jove*,  
 When he made fate, and said, thus shall it be.  
 The king ! no more —— we now must mask our  
 souls.



## SCENE VII.

*Amasis, Mardian, Arbaces, Sethon, and atten-  
 dants.*

*Ama.* Bid *Nitas* lead the captives forth to death.  
 The *Perian* oft' has lavish'd, in his rage,  
 The blood of my best subjects —— But revenge  
 Shall now be mine ; her hundred iron whips  
 Shall all be brandish'd, and my foes shall feel me :  
 Of the rich purple stream that flows from them,  
 I'll make libation to the injur'd manes

Of those brave friends; who, fighting by my side,  
Have strew'd the fields with heaps of mangl'd limbs,  
And fill'd the air with peals of dying groans.

Murd. Ha! goes it there! — I must prevent  
their deaths,

Or all our schemes are impotent and fruitless.

(aside to Arbaces.)

Your majesty will not prophane this day;  
This sacred jubilee of general mirth;  
When Egypt reaps the harvest of her vict'ry,  
And all her sons, with jocund revelings,  
Enjoy the pleasures that attend on conquerors,  
The soldiers now, in wantonness and ease,  
Devote themselves to Bacchus — all their tents  
Are spread with garlands; each one tells his fellow,  
The number of the slain his arm has fell'd.  
With laurel now they wreath their household gods,  
Whose presence heightens and improves their tran-

sports,  
And more extends the comfort of their joy;  
Pardon me, sacred sir! — but blood, methinks,  
Should not discolour this day's happy whiteness.

Amas. To morrow then they die Phanes and Setbon  
Hatshe, and protract their doom. This day, indeed,

(Exeunt Phanes and Setbon.)

Has giv'n me back part of that mass of glory  
Which changing fortune lately rif'd from me.  
Methinks, I now again appear as great,  
As when with Apries, I for empire struggl'd:  
Long did the goddess vict'ry, doubtful stand,  
At length she pac'd herself upon my brow;  
Smiling, she came, pleas'd to be seated there,  
And bid my budding honours ever flourish.

Murd. Where slept my father's genius at that  
hour?

But I must speak a language that becomes me;  
The courtier fawns — then, when he means to

(aside.) Our Eastern world knows not a greater emperor;  
Provincial lords, and tributary kings,

Shall

Shall bending come, and bow before your footstool.  
 Make you the arbitrator of their quarrels,  
 And shield them from their enemies hostile force,  
 Beneath the spreading shelter of your power.

*Arb.* The god, who rules the day, in all his travels,

Sees not a happier monarch! so belov'd!  
 Your sub'ects, ev'ry moment, send to heav'n  
 Their pray'rs for your success; in ev'ry heart  
 You reign unrivall'd—nor was *Cyrus* more  
 The darling of the skies!

*Ama.* Cease, cease, this Harr'ry!  
 'Tis a mean vicious habit those contract,  
 Who hide the fettl'd purpose of their souls  
 Under its smooth and glitt'ring ornaments,  
 As they disdain'd the honest company  
 Of plain and native truth.—I shou'd be happy,  
 Above the wishes of desiring mortals;  
 Bayond the golden visions of Elysium,  
 Did lovely *Miriana* on me smile,  
 Or cast a soft'ning look on my despair!  
 Honour and pow'r, like empty, gaudy trifles,  
 For her I'd quit, and think the barter gain.  
 But she, with eyes severe, and down-cast mien,  
 Tells me, ambition never was her choice;  
 A crown, to her, brings no sincere delight;  
 She seeks content in a more humble lot.

*Mard.* Yet time, my liege, may make her less  
 averse.

Who knows not, there are moments, when that sex  
 Throw off th' affected pride, and forc'd constraint;  
 That keep 'em from consenting to be happy.

*Ama.* It shall be so—no obstacle shall stop  
 me;  
 Not all the subtleties, the labour'd arts,  
 The feints that her whole sex devise to shun us,  
 Shall bar me from those joys I mean to prove,  
 When, towards mine, her beating breast shall move,  
 And her whole soul shall give a loose to love.

(Exeunt.

C 3 SCENE

AMASIS.

## SCENE VIII.

Miriana's apartment.

Psammenitus, Miriana.

*Psam.* This, *Miriana*, is, indeed, reward  
 For all the perils that attend on war ;  
 Ample as vast ambition e'er could wish !  
 To reign supremely here within thy heart,  
 Is far more glorious than anointed pow'r !  
 Then let my father take it all ; this world,  
 This trifling gewgaw, if compar'd to thee,  
 And leave me only to indulge my raptures ;  
 To gaze on thee, thou source of my delight :  
 I ask no more. —

*Mir.* Nor will he grant you that ;  
 But, like a lurking thief, he strives to rob  
 And spoil thee of thy treasure. — Yes, I own,  
 Nor need I speak it with a glowing blush,  
 By honour, love, and all the holy ties  
 That keep mankind within the bounds of order,  
 Your right I am : nor shall the world united,  
 Ever shake the faith of my devoted soul.

*Psam.* Oh thou all excellence ! — thou wond'rous  
 proof  
 Of constancy and love ! — ye libertines,  
 Ye lawless rovers, who, to fate desire,  
 Ravage thro' all love's province ! can ye find  
 Ev'n in that vast variety you prove,  
 A charm like virue ! — 'tis the only good,  
 An emanation of that source of light,  
 Whose all-creating word, from darkness rais'd  
 You lucid firmament, and bid it shine

With

With never-ceasing lustre. Thou wert form'd  
To chase despair and sorrow from my breast ;  
Good fortune dwells with thee.

*Mir.* Alas ! my prince !

I fear our happiness will ne'er be perfect.  
Why did mistaking fortune place me here,  
Amidst the artful guiles that reign in courts ;  
Where men betray each other ? where each smile  
Is big with ruin—and where innocence  
Is sure to meet destruction !

*Psam.* Thou art safe

In these protecting arms ; they shall preserve thee.  
Thou quintessence of all that's good on earth,  
All the collected sweets that crown the year.  
The fragancy of nature, dwells with thee.

Why dost thou talk thus ?

Art thou not all the blessing of my life ?  
My father has disclaim'd me—torn asunder  
The bonds that nature shou'd have bound for ever ;  
And thou art all I've left me to rejoice in.  
Oh ! why then, *Miriana*, art thou thus ?  
You pain me to the heart !

*Mir.* My lord, my love !

Am I thy cause of pain ? Oh ! thou art dear,  
Dear to these eyes as is returning morn,  
After a night of darkness and despair.  
As injur'd reputation clear'd and brighten'd,  
Which long, by lead, defamatory breath,  
Had been obscur'd and fully'd : witness, heav'n !  
There cannot be a circumstance in life  
So terrible, but I wo'd take my share,  
My partnership of sorrow, with my husband.

*Psam.* Thou soul of truth, of tenderness and  
love !

*Mir.* Oh ! my *Psammonitus* !

*Psam.* Suppress that sigh !

Thy bosom heaves, as if thy throbbing heart  
Wou'd force a passage through the beauteous man-  
sion.

*Mir.* I will suppress it :

I'll stifle all my fears, tho' the sad vision  
Is, to my tortur'd fancy, now presented.

I will put off the Woman—— with strong fortitude

Arm all my soul? —— trust in that holy pow'r  
That makes afflicted innocence its care,  
Nor doubt its great protection.

*Psam.* Still thou'rt sad:

Thy eyes betray an inward languishing.  
Why art thou not, like me, all extacy?  
To fold thee thus in my straining arms,  
To grasp thy love—to hold her to my bosom,  
Is such profusion! such excess of bliss!

As quite destroys the mem'ry of my wrongs!  
Leaves in my soul no vacancy for thought  
T' intrude and interrupt my present joys.

*Mir.* Oh! my lov'd lord, these strong emotions  
fright me.

Extremes of joy, or grief, are often fatal.  
Whence 'tis I know not, since I know not guilt;  
My soul, as if some evil did pursue me,  
Starts at itself, or at the rushing wind,  
And quite o'erwhelms me with its dreadful bodings.

*Psam.* Banish those images of sorrow from thee:  
My bosom, like the shelt'ring wings of Cupid  
Shall still protect thee, whilst his goddess-mother,  
Blushing, shall find her own immortal charms  
Are faint and languid, when oppos'd to thine.

*Mir.* Yet I must speak, and ease my loaded mind:  
Last night, when solitude and darkness reign'd,  
And busy nature seem'd to have left her work;  
My thoughts employ'd on thee, I try'd to rest.  
Scarce were my eye-lids clos'd, when a thin form,  
Resembling my late father as he liv'd,  
With slow and awful pace, stalk'd round my bed.  
With hollow voice, and groans that shook the roof,  
Thrice cry'd he out—— my child, my *Miriano*,  
Take heed—— beware of *Amasis*! —— t' be pointed  
hour

That calls thee to the tomb, is almost come;

The

The sand, that fill'd thy glass with ebbing pace  
 Is running to its last—Soon shall we meet;  
 But be thou sure to let me find thee spotless,  
 Lest my dishonour'd shade detest and loath thee.  
 With fear half dead, I started from my sleep,  
 Sent forth a shriek——when, lo! the dreadful  
 vision,

Swifter than thought itself, was lost in air.

*Psam.* The mimicry of fancy——'tis no more.  
 When night, with her black curtain, veils the  
 world,

And sleep chains up the faculties of men,  
 The loosen'd soul oft takes its airy flight,  
 Through ways impassible, and craggy steepes;  
 Sometimes descending to old ocean's bosom;  
 Anon she bounds, and on *Olympus'* top,  
 With wings expanded, seems to reach the stars,  
 But thou shalt lose these visionary fears;  
 Love shall exhale and dissipate thy tears.  
 So, when the blooming rose, its pendent head  
 Reclining bows, while morning dews are shed,  
 His genial heat, the rising sun extends,  
 And o'er its languid face, a new vermilion sends.

(Exit.

End of the second Act.

A C T



## ACT III. SCENE I.

Mardian, Arbaces.

*Mardian.*


 THIS, my *Arbaces*, is the destin'd hour  
 To crown our wish, or ruin our re-  
 venge.

To night, ye gods, who watch anointed  
 heads,  
 And keep the lives of kings from violation,  
 But neuter stand ; in your own blest abodes  
 Securely happy, and serenely lull'd,  
 Leave the mean business of this nether world  
 To wakeful, thinking man—nor intervene,  
 Nor stop the dreadful stroak that I intend.  
 But say, my friend, hast thou yet sounded *Nitis* ?  
 How bears his haughty spirit his indignity ?

*Arb.* Ev'n as the angry main, when warring  
 winds

Contending with opposing mountain-waves,  
 It swells and roars with the tempestuous shock :  
 At first he falter'd, and with broken speech  
 Cry'd out, 'tis true, king *Amasis* has wrong'd me,  
 And yet I live to tell thee I am injur'd ;  
 Oft to myself I've whisper'd it in secret.  
 But dar'd not speak aloud, lest thunder follow'd  
 To rive its author, who, begirt with pow'r,  
 Avows th' affront, and sets me at defiance.

*Mard.*

*Mard.* Stung with that thought, his soul was sure  
enflam'd?

*Arb.* It was, and swelling instant to the height  
Of mad revenge, I am yours, says he, *Arbaces*;  
Be your design horrid, and black as hell.  
Dies he by poison, or th' assassin's stab,  
This hand shall minister the fatal steel,  
Or mix the potion that shall give him death.  
In short, he's promis'd, on a signal giv'n,  
To ope the prison gates, and arm the captives.

*Mard.* It rises to my wish. The waining night  
Calls on us to be speedy——haste, away,  
Bear him this ring, as token of my friendship;  
Let him, this instant, arm the Persian chiefs;  
'Tis now near midnight: tell him too, *Arbaces*,  
When the imperial circle binds my brow,  
My bounty shall be endless——as for you,  
My friend, and partner in this glorious prize,  
Stretch thy aspiring thoughts; ask a reward  
Such as may suit my gratitude and love,  
Let it be vast, unlimited!——for know,  
Thou'l be the second person in our empire.

*Arb.* I go, and leave the recompence to you;  
As now I merit from you, so reward me. *(Exit.)*



## S C E N E II.

*Mardian.*

Why, this is as it shou'd be!——god-like pow'r,  
Thou noble thirst, thou sever of the soul  
Not to be quench'd, but from th'immortal spring  
Of ever-streaming greatness!  
Let priests with cold enervate hearts inculeate,  
And preach dull morals to th'unthinking vulgar;  
What

What know the brave, but vengeance and ambition?  
 Ambition, that lifts th' exalted soul,  
 And places it in Jove's eternal seat!  
 Now, Amasis, thou'rt caught, the toils are set,  
 And if thou escape me, spurn me for a slave. [Exit.



## SCENE III.

Miriana's apartment.

Pſammenitus, Miriana.

Pſam. No more, my love, give to the winds thy sorrows;  
 Let them disperse them, scatter 'em abroad,  
 Where misery and sad misfortunes dwell,  
 Far from this mansion, this bleſt seat of love.  
 Let the gay god, light at those beamy eyes  
 His lambent torch, while joy, with pleasing smiles,  
 Sits on thy face, and tells me Miriana  
 Is bleſt in the adoring fond Pſammenitus.

Mir. Yes, prince, 'tis true, my paſſion does  
 transcend

All that the faithfulſt love did ever vow.  
 When thou wert absent in the bloody field,  
 How was my trembling heart posſeſt'd with fear?  
 Morning and evening were my vows ſent up  
 To that preſiding power that rules o'er all,  
 Still to preserve thee 'midſt the raging fight,  
 Where death lay ambuſh'd in a thouſand ſhapes,  
 And where each moment wing'd th'untimely fate  
 Of ſome Egyptian hero.

Pſam. The good gods,  
 Who're never deaf to piety like thine,

Heard

Heard thy petitions ; 'tis to thee my love ;  
 To *Miriana's*, ardent supplications,  
 The life of her *Psammenitus* was given.  
 My fiery courser, by a wound enrag'd,  
 Plung'd head-long, where the thickest of the foe,  
 Like a strong rampart planted, fought my life  
 Then threw me with so violent a shock,  
 It stup'd my sense, and left me almost breathless ;  
 And now a thousand swords were drawn to end me,  
 When a brave party of my valiant friends  
 Rush'd in, and snatch'd me from surrounding death.

*Mir.* Kind heav'n, what thanks, what gratitude is  
 due

For such unbounded mercy ; my whole life  
 Shall be but one continu'd act of praise.  
 For this thy wond'rous, thy amazing goodness !

*Psam.* Oh, how this tenderness transports my  
 soul !

Thy unresisting beauties are thy least,  
 Thy meaneſt charm——thy mind is all perfection.  
 Oh, I could dwell for ever on this theme !  
 Had I the eloquence of gods themselves ;  
 The inspiration of the sacred nine,  
 More than persuasive harmony e'er uttered,  
 I could not speak the fulness of my heart.

*Mir.* Sure never love was so distrest as ours.  
 Amidst the tide of pleasure that flows o'er me,  
 To hear my faithful prince avow his flame ;  
 Yet when I think on *Amasis*, a fear  
 Like ice upon the bosom of the spring,  
 Nips all the budding blossoms of my joy.

*Psam.* Thus let me warm thee ; thus with rapt'rous  
 kiffes ! [Embracing her.]

The sweet contagion thou shalt catch from me,  
 Like mine, thy ev'ry pulse shall beat with love.  
 A boiling tumult rises in my veins,  
 Fierce extacies shoot thro' my glowing breast,  
 And my whole soul is raging with desire !  
 To night, my fair ; to night, my soldiers toils,  
 My weary marches thro' the dusty fields,

And

And all the wounds I have in fight sustain'd,  
Shall well be recomenc'd. Within thy arms  
All sorrow shall be lost, each senfe absorb'd,  
And drown'd in our luxuriant soft delights!

*Mir. Forbear, Psammenitus.— To-morrow's dawn*

May bring an happy Opportunity,  
When we may fall, with our beseeching tears,  
At the king's feet. Perhaps, all-pitying heaven  
May turn his stubborn and tenacious heart,  
And he may yield me with a blessing, to thee,

*Psam. No, I will be before-hand with my fate,  
And if ill fortune comes it shall lag after :*

*Thou art a virgin bride, my love, as yet,  
Thy beauteous innocence is unenjoy'd ;  
And shall I leave it to a rival's mercy ?  
I must be old, indeed, insensible*

*To those illustrious charms that shine around thee,  
T'admit of such a thought. Thou art my portion,  
My whole of happiness, a countless sum !*

*Dear soft'ner of the rugged hours of life.*

*To bed, my fair ; and when the god of sleep  
Has spread his balmy wings throughout the court,  
Secret I'll come, no light but love's bright lamp :  
In silence will we interchange our souls,  
And waste the night in more than mortal pleasures.*

*Mir. Still, my good lord, though thou art all o'er  
kindness,*

*This woman's weakness hangs upon my fancy ;  
Great Juno, that presides o'er marriage rights,  
Thou sister-queen of Jove, protect and guard me.*

*(Exit.)*

SCENE

## SCENE IV.

Psammetitus alone.

Excellent woman ! thou hast all my soul !  
 Since she is more than nature's hand cou'd frame,  
 Without the help of some excelling god,  
 Who try'd t'undo his brothers of the sky,  
 And plac'd perfection in her radiant form !

## SCENE V.

Psammenitus, Mardian.

*Psam.* What ! *Mardian* ! say, how wears the night ?

*Mard.* She's now in her mideourse : the twinkling stars

Muffle their heads, and hide themselves in clouds :  
 Darkness has now extended her black veil,  
 And covered nature's face ; the moon's obscur'd,  
 Nor shines with borrow'd rays to guide the world.

*Psam.* Good night, my friend, my *Miriana* claims me.

Too long have I been absent from her arms,  
 And follow'd stern *Bellona*'s loud alarms,  
 But peace, once more, rears up its golden head,  
 The olive does its wish'd for branches spread,  
 And love the soul of all its joys does on me shed.

(Exit.

SCENE



## SCENE VI.

Mardian,

So near the crisis —— then assist me hell!  
 I've ly'd myself thus far into his faith,  
 And dearly shall he pay me for my friendship.  
 If my design succeeds — The Viper's touch  
 Shall give him bliss, sooner than *Miriana*!  
 Whence is that scream! —— 'twas the dire screech-

owl's note

Boding destruction! —— Not return'd — not yet?  
 Why does he loiter thus? —— Rising *Arbaces*,  
 Each moment now is worth a thousand ages.  
 How expectation wracks me! — hark, what noise!  
 'Twas fear alone created it — All's hush'd:  
 Sure *Nitas* has not shrunk from the design,  
 I know *Arbaces* trusty — His revenge  
 Will keep him steady; oh he's here at last.

## SCENE VII.

Enter to him *Arbaces*.

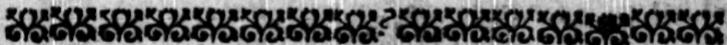
*Mard.* Now, my good genious? does sedition  
 thrive?  
*Arb.* As well as souls resolv'd like ours can wish.  
*Nitas* has kept his word —— Forth from their den.

The captive chiefs, compleatly arm'd, have rush'd.

The

The guards that keep the city's western gate  
 Still weaker grow ; the *Perſians* wonders act,  
 The raging populace have ta'en the alarm,  
 And join, they know not why, the midnight tumult.  
*Mard.* 'Tis well ; in mischief thou'rt my other  
 self.

The ~~sun~~ approaches—see, *Cephrenus* comes ;  
 Distraction and affright sit on his brow :  
 He seems the prophet of his master's fate.



## SCENE VIII.

*Enter to them Cephrenus.*

*Mard.* Your looks speak horror, soldier ; what's  
 the news ?

*Ceph.* O my good lord, treason is at our doors.  
 Where is the prince ? Destruction comes apace ;  
 And, like a spreading flood, o'erwhelms us all.  
 The prison, that inclos'd the slaves of war,  
 Has burst its gates ; how, no man knows ; but *Nitas*  
 No doubt, suspecting that his forfeit head  
 Must answer for't, has midst the tumult fled.

*Mard.* Say'st thou, *Cephrenus* ? has the villain  
 escap'd ?  
 But, justice, yet, may overtake his Crimes.

*Ceph.* Haste, *Mardian*, haste ; each moment  
 swells the terror,  
 Without the palace a well-chosen band  
 Wait the command of prince *Pſammeuitus*.  
 Lead, lead me to the general—

*Mard.* We'll seek him,  
 My valiant friend, thou loyal noble soldier.  
 The statesman's fittest tool. Wretched *Cephrenus*.  
 (aside.)

(*Exeunt.*  
 SCENE

## SCENE IX.

Pſammenitus alone.

Alarms and dagners are so freugent to me,  
That busy fancy forms 'em even here  
Beneath my father's hospitable roof.  
What noise is this? (liſtning.) The night was  
meant by nature  
To heal our cares, and give us ſoft reſoſte.

## SCENE X.

Enter to the prince Mardian, Arbaces, and Cephrenus.

Pſam. Ha! what means this? oh my foreboding  
fears! Why break you thus the ſilence of the night?  
And with a more than trait'rous insolence,  
Thus rudely press upon your prince's privacy?

Mard. Lo! to the earth, Pſammenitus, we bend.  
(kneeling)  
Pardon this for'd intrusion of your ſlaves.  
The kingdom's safety, — your own ſacred life,  
Are threaten'd now, and in the utmoſt danger.

Ceph. (kneeling) Most valiant prince! oh hear  
your prostrate ſoldier.

Accursed

Accursed treason, that still shuns the light,  
And hides by day her foul opprobrious head,  
Now stalks abroad, with midnight darkness mask'd.  
The pris'ners have escap'd ; the gath'ring croud  
Increase the tumult ; now thro' all our streets  
Confusion, horror, and wild uproar reign.

*Psam.* Haste you to quell it then ; why stand you here ?

*Cepb.* There is the courage that once warm'd your soul !  
Our soldiers have no hearts without their leader,

Without his presence, they are nothing worth ;  
He animates alone, and whets their swords ;  
Which else are blunted, and but deal in air.

*Psam.* Sure heav'n itself's combin'd to my destruction ;  
Else wherefore comes this unexpected curse ?  
Shall I forsake, and disappoint my wife !  
While those warm kisses, I at parting gave,  
Glow on her lips, and light the flame of love ?  
Hell—hell is in that thought ; it mads my brain !  
Or shall I leave my people a weak prey  
To the destroyer's hand ?



### SCENE XI.

Enter to them an Officer wounded, with his sword drawn.

*Psam.* Soldier, what means  
This streaming blood, and look so full of terror ?  
*Off.* As on my post I stood, heading a band  
Of brave companions, to defend the city,  
The captive chiefs, who had enflam'd the rabble,

And gather'd up a still increasing train  
 Of robbers, cut-throats, and despairing villains,  
 (A num'rous rout) pour'd on me like a deluge.  
 My men fled back, the darkness broke all order,  
 And now they threat revenge—— you, prince,  
 alone

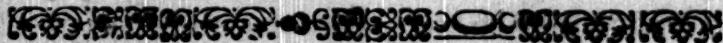
Can stem the torrent ; loud on you they call,  
*Egypt* is lost without *Psammenitus*,  
*Psam.* And do they call *Psammenitus*? I call  
 O my poor country ! all thy wounds are mine.



## SCENE XII.

Mardian. *alone.*

Good night, my lord, to you, and to your peace ;  
 For if it e'er return to you again,  
 Flames shall no more destroy, nor waters drown ;  
 All things that nature has made opposites  
 Shall kindly join, and blend with one another.  
 The king !—now, mischief, to thy noble work.



## SCENE XIII.

Amafis. Mardian,

*Ama.* Torment of mind ! — he is not to be  
 vanquish'd ;  
 This laughing deity ; this tyrant *Cupid*,  
 That rages in my soul !—oh thou fond boy,

More

More than the strength of *Hercules* is wanting  
To tear thy silken strings, that hold my heart.  
From *Miriana's* eyes thy shafts are sent ;  
From thence they come, with never-erring aim,  
And pierce e'en all they touch——now I behold  
her,

Th' enchanting, lovely maid ; she's ever present :  
Darkness and night can never shroud her from me ;  
Imagination can create a day  
Amidst the thickest gloom. In sleep she mixes,  
And forms my dreams ; then, starting, I awake,  
And, for my love, grasp a delusive shadow.  
I cannot rest ; in vain the god of sleep  
Is still invok'd : like death, to men in mis'ry,  
The more he's courted, he the farther flies.  
My nephew too, a truant to his bed ?  
Then those curst hags, who nightly ride the air,  
Have something baneful surely to perform,  
And therefore hunt us from our downy rest.  
Speak, honest *Mardian*, wherefore art thou here ?

*Mard.* Can sleep, my liege, come to these weary  
lids,

When treason is so near your royal person ?

*Ama.* Treason ! ha ! what ? my son ! durst he  
conspire,

And aim his plots, here, at our sacred life ?

*Mard.* My lord, 'tis certain, that the *Perissæ*  
slaves,

Who shou'd have bled to-morrow, have escap'd ;

The frightened city's fill'd with dire alarms ;

And prince *Pſammenitus*

Departed hence, e'en now, to quell the tumult ;

But fore it irk'd him, war should interpose,

And break upon the softer hours of love,

When expectation, to the highest rais'd,

Brought him so near his bliss.

*Ama.* So near his bliss !

Curst, innate traytor ? — but thou speak'st in riddles.

*Mard.* Think you, my lord, the youthful *Miri-*  
*ana*,

With

With all that world of charms the gods have given her,

Has not her softer hours ? or that your son, With youthful ardor, sues her still in vain ? Is this a time, when friendly darkness covers And hide their blushes from the tell-tale sun, For women to be coy ? — she is not form'd Of marble, nor is he turn'd anchorite.

*Ama.* Oh ! by the Gods ! I guess thy meaning : well ;

Is this the chastity of which she boasts ? As cold to me, as nipping wintry frost ; With him, as wanton as the most abandon'd Of that vain sex, when pride and luxury court 'em. But my sure vengeance yet shall reach her minion ; I'll tear his form into ten thousand pieces, Or, like old *Saturn*, feed on my own issue.

*Mard.* What have I said ! o pardon, royal sir, Alas . I thought not it wou'd shake you thus ; Curse on the heedless rashness of my tongue ! Your changing visage wears a form of fury ; Your eyes, like blazing meteors, roll their flames, As they wou'd hurl destruction all around 'em.

*Ama!* Hell and confusion ! — hence thou struggling virtue !

Too long I've kept an awful slavish distance, And looپ'd to suethere, where I might command : But, by the god's ! I'll not endure it — no — This night shall well repay me ; full fruition Shall teach me to forget love's blandishments, And all the idle softnesses it brings — Absent ! a lucky opportunity ! — I will supplant him ; this aspiring boy That dares to rival me in love and empire.

*Mard.* What is this love, which reason cannot tame ? It bends the warrior, and quite melts him down To the complainings of a sulking girl ! Oh, sacred sir ! in honour's name I beg you Stifle this fruitless passion.

*Ama.*

*Ama.* Bid the wind,  
When it roots oaks and mountains from the earth,  
And with the tempest shakes the vast Olympus,  
Be calm at once! — I must, I will possess her.  
Heark thee; art thou their go-between? their pa-  
der?

Their *Argus*, with thy hundred eyes exploring,  
Who comes to interrupt their affiancement?

Come, come, be open — I can keep a secret.

*Mard.* My lord, I only know they love each other:  
And, had not fortune crost their hopes, to night,  
Perhaps, they had been happy.

*Ama.* Ha! — indeed!  
Shall he be happy; and must I despair?  
And I posseſſ'd of empire, boundless pow'r!  
And shall my creature, a slight girl, despise me?  
By heav'n! I'll go this instant — darkness favours,  
And the kind night  
Puts on her gloomy habit to conceal me.  
This way leads to her chamber. (going.)

*Mard.* Think, my lord;  
Yet think, when cool reflection comes across you,  
Perhaps you'll wish —

*Ama.* No more — not *Jove* shall stop me;  
No matter what's the consequence! — I'll on.  
Ha! whence this trembling — what is't that, unseen,  
Pulls from within to stop my full career?  
Peace, babbling conscience! or, whate'er thou art!  
Hence, vain chymerick fears! — my mounting  
spirits

As strongly beat their round, as when in battle,  
Ten winters since, I clim'd the steep ascent  
Of a high mountain, on whose lofty summit  
My foes encamp'd, amidst a shower of darts,  
Whose missile points sung dreadful in the air,  
All aim'd at my devoted head. Now, then,  
To prove the force of *Miriana's* charms;  
In spight of omens, and their false alarms.

*(Exit.)*



## S C E N E XIV.

Mardian *alone.*

Away, fond fool, ruin and death o'ertake thee.  
 Ye powers infernal, who, with ceaseless malice  
 Pursue mankind to bring them to destruction :  
 Shed your malignant influence on their bed.  
 Let each endearment be full fraught with venom,  
 Whose poison, rankling in their guilty minds,  
 Shall make them swell, till thought has burst the  
 brain.

Now let their thirsty souls be fully sated.  
 Let them drink deep of love's incestuous draught,  
 That they may act the horror my heart pants for !  
 Then shall I smile, to see them writhing with pain,  
 By which, a glorious diadem I gain.      *(Exit.)*

*The End of the third A C T.*



A C T



## ACT IV. SCENE I.

Amafis *alone.*

O W vain is the pre-eminence and pow'r,  
 That high authority which monarchs  
 claim  
 O'er their dependent subjects, if like  
 slaves

They crouch to their imperious appetites !  
 Tho' lordly masters, who, like true usurpers,  
 Demand from us most abject, tame submiss'ion,  
 Yet cheat us of those great rewards they promise.  
 Methought I could e'en mate th'immortal gods  
 Possess'd of *Miriana* ! — My fond soul  
 In secret long had languish'd for her beauties ;  
 Yet, midst the stealth of my triumphant joys.  
 A guilty fear lurk'd underneath my bliss,  
 Eating the root of all my growing pleasures.  
 Why should this scarecrow Conscience haunt me  
 thus ?  
 I'll think no more on't ! Ha ! by heav'n she comes !  
 I would avoid her, now, more eagerly  
 Than I first sought and prest her to my bosom.

SCENE



## SCENE II.

I 3 4 1 0 2 V 1 T 0 A

Amasis, Miriana.

*Mir.* Lest me with silence thus, *Pammenitus* ?  
 Now you are cruel, as you have been kind !

What ! not a word —

Oh thou unkind one, turn again, and bless  
 Me with thy light !

*Ama.* For ever shall my eyes  
 Be rivetted to thine ; — Here will I gaze  
 Till life itself dissolves, and I expire.

*(As he turns to her she shrieks,  
 and falls into a swoon.)*

Look up thou charmer of my thankful soul !  
 I'll pay thee back thy tenderness and love.

The king shall pay thee the acknowledgement  
 Thy goodness has deserv'd !

*Mir.* O touch me not !

Not heav'n itself can give me back my peace.  
 Each curst embrace of thine, each touch is death ;  
 'Tis hell, an earnest of a sure damnation !

Oh ! — my soul's sick —

*Ama.* Then there is something hid,  
 Which fate has not unriddled to me yet,  
 What hoa ! who waits ?

I 3 4 1 0 2

SCENE

bliss I long to find on the earth now.



## SCENE III.

To them Iras and other attendants.

Iras. Alas ! my mistress dead !  
The manly blood that purpl'd o'er her face  
Has left its seat ! See how it strives for mast'ry ;  
Contending with the paleness that succeeds it.  
O bend her gently forward.

Ama. Whence is this ?  
Is the crime more in me, than in my son ?  
Why should it be ! Ha ! — what ! — again this  
My soul is struck ! — a trembling comes across  
me,

And more appalls me, than a host of foes !

Mir. Why have you brought me back from friendly  
death ?  
Since he alone can e'er befriend me now.  
To view the sun again ; whose brightest beams  
My spotted crimes will darken and obscure.

Ama. O tell me quick, thou minion of my soul !  
Why you so much detest my fond embraces ?  
Thy eyes are big with fate ; delay not, then,  
Or apprehension will soon turn me wild !  
My thoughts, like Sisyphus' eternal stone,  
Still rise with horror, and distract my mind.

Mir. Yes, I will tell thee, wretched king ! —

Last night,

Blot it, 'ye gods,' from the revolving year !  
O let it not return ; or if it must,  
Let villains chuse it to transact their mischiefs ;  
Let murders, perjuries, and all the crimes  
That bring most sure perdition, happen on it !

Ama. What means this wild distraction ? whence  
this raving ?

Wilt

Wilt thou not tell me then ? or must I seek  
For it below, where hellish fiends consult  
To plague the race of men ?

*Mir.* Oh, my torn heart !

Where is my husband ! — where's *Psammenitus* ?  
Would I were mad !

*Ama.* Thy husband, didst thou say ?  
Horror, and sure destruction, wait that word !

*Mir.* Yes, my *Psammenitus*, my injur'd husband !  
My dear and wedded lord ! — Oh ! what am I ?

*Ama.* Nay, then I shall not need a thunderbolt  
To strike me down ! — No, ye avenging gods,  
My weighty crimes will do it of themselves.  
Bear me no longer, then, thou mother earth ;  
At once I'll ease thee of so curst an offspring.



#### S C E N E IV.

*As he draws his sword, enter Phanes and Sethon*

*Pha.* 'Twas the king's voice ! help, ho, and force  
his sword

*From him.* Alas ! what means this frantick rage ?

*Ama.* Begone from me ; avaunt ; hence regicides !  
Ye more than murd'lers of a ruin'd king !  
Fly from me, swifter than from foul contagion :  
My breath's infected ; it will blast you all ;  
Tis far more venomous than mortal plagues.

*Setb.* Have patience, sir ; repose yourself on  
heav'n.

*Ama.* Patience, and heav'n ! I'm fury all, and  
hell ! —

He snatches at my soul ! — He shall not leave it.  
It is my fate alone, not I, am guilty.

Hark !

Hark ! — the snakes hiss ! — they curl around  
me too !

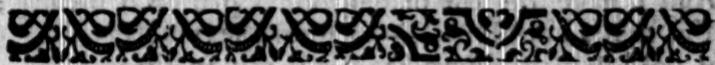
You sulph'rous flames are not prepar'd for me !

O for water — rivers — rivers.

*Pba.* Let's bear him to his chamber — He  
grows wild.

*Ama.* Plunge, plunge me in a gulph ten thousand  
fathoms deep.

[*Ama* is turned out ; the attendants follow.



## SCENE V.

*Miriana.*

And what remains for *Miriana* now ?  
Where wilt thou, wretch, hide thy detested head ?  
Yes, I will fly far from the face of day ;  
No more the sun shall cheer me with his ray :  
To th' utmost confines of the world I'll roam ;  
Earth's bowels shall be rent to find a tomb.  
To death devoted I will cleave the ground ;  
Fate calls, and I expire upon the sound.



## SCENE VI.

*Pfammenitus, Cephrenus, and Armenon.*

*Pfam.* No farther, my good frien — No, by  
my honour,  
You shall not stir a step ; — haste to your rest  
(*Ex. Ceph. and Arm.*

S C E N E



## SCENE VII.

Psammenitus alone.

The morning has stole on me unperceiv'd,  
 And I have lost the bridegroom's promis'd blessing ;  
 Yet that's not all ; — a stupid heaviness,  
 A cold unusual damp has seiz'd my spirits :  
 My slackning sinews quite forget their office,  
 And all my faculties are on a sudden  
 Dull and inactive grown — What can it mean ?  
 I'll haste to *Miriana* ; there alone,  
 If comfort can be found, the gods have plac'd it.



## SCENE VIII.

Mardian and Arbaces.

*Arb.* Yes, *Mardian*, it is certain there are gods,  
 And there are dreadful ministers of vengeance,  
 The harbingers of *Jove*, who makes enquiry  
 For the iniquities of guilty man.  
 I think I have a share of fortitude,  
 And I could reason down the idle imag'ry  
 Of mimick dreams, if all were well within :  
 But in despight of boasting, here it lies.

And it requires a more than mortal strength  
 The shoulders of an *Atlas*, to support it on high.

A. VI 2 3 2

Mard.

Mard. Pho, you o'errate it, thou wilt mar thy  
fame. — Let priests and women, in repentant sighs,  
Breathe out their souls — the injur'd brave can  
In great revenge, a never-dying cordial,  
But that a foolish dream should thus disturb thee —  
Pr'ythee no more on't!

Arb. I will never hence,  
Till I shall cease myself to think, or be.  
Methought I was arraign'd at *Mines*' bar:  
*Stern Eacus* and *Rhadamanthus* cry'd,  
" Room for the wretch, whose complicated guilt  
" Brings its perdition with it—Common crimes  
" Contrition and amendment may wipe off;  
" But this arch-monster is already judg'd :  
" Seize him this instant!—When a squalid fiend  
Whose frowning visage made e'en hell itself  
More dark and terrible, strait fatten'd on me :  
I struggled with him, and my yielding joints,  
Like aerafising flax, were torn asunder,  
And scatter'd o'er those dark and pathless regions.  
The horror of the vision soon awak'd me.  
When a cold sweat hung on my aching limbs,  
And I was agoniz'd all o'er, both mind and body!

*Hard. Is this the daring Spirit?—this the man  
Whom I had chose, selected from mankind,  
And offer'd him the partnership of Empire?  
Is he thus terrify'd by aerial worlds,  
With such a species as ne'er yet had being,  
But in th' imagination of weak dotards?  
Death and distraction! how it grates my soul,  
To find I'm so egregiously mistaken!*

*Arb.* Is it but nothing then? this damning crime?  
To drive him on to incest! — Nature starts  
And runs affrighted back to hear it nam'd.

*Mard.* Collect your scatter'd spirits, be thyself!  
Think on *Mandane*! on that precious wreck  
Where all thy fortunes were at once devour'd.

*Arb* True; I am injur'd beyond common suffer-  
ing;  
My ravish'd love torn from my ardent hopes :  
No glimpse of joy remains; a wretched prospect  
Of lute despair and misery awaits me ;  
And, to compleat the blow, I've join'd with thee  
To make damnation sure. [Groaning beard within.

*Mard* Whence is that groan ?  
Look out, *Arbaces*, summon thy whole soul,  
Man ev'ry faculty to meet th'encounter,  
Or we are both betray' (Arbaces goes out.)



## SCENE IX.

Mardian alone.

Would he were fast;  
His lips close seal'd ——— the weight of death  
upon 'em.  
O cursed babler !—Ha ! I'll do it now,  
When he returns : no, 'twill alarm the court,  
Howe'er, he shall not live; within an hour  
I'll send a trusty agent that shall spoil  
His telling tales.

SCENE

## SCENE X.

*Enter to him Arbaces.*

*Mard.* The Matter, good *Arbaces*?

*Arb.* It is the king! — Forth from his wounded

With agonizing sighs that pierce the heav'ns,  
He sends his sad lamentations. Smiting his breast,  
He cries, " O wretched king! — O dreadful fate !  
" Enjoy thy daughter ! violate the bed  
" Of thy own son, sprung even from thy bowels ?  
" Monstrous effect of hot and gloating lust !  
" And you, too cruel gods, that could withhold  
" Your lifted bolts, ah ! why did you not strike ?  
" Quick drive me to the center, e'er my soul  
" Was stain'd with the accurs'd incestuous act.

*Mard.* 'Tis now but plety to wish him dead :

Death is a sweet cessation of our being :

A kind insensibility of mis'ry.

To be no more ; in an eternal sleep

To lose the mem'ry of our mortal woes ;

Consuming anguish ! sharp and grinding pain !

The torments of a self-condemning mind

Ever reproaching ! to feel these no more

Is to be happy. Then, when he is gone,

(And young *Pammenitus*, thro' duty, follows him)

Think upon pow'r, that godlike attribute,

Despotick sway and absolute dominion :

'Tis rapture e'en in thought ! — 'tis extasy ! enjoyment !

Of all that's great, desireable, or good !

What were those very gods we worship once ?

But brave aspiring mortals, whose vast spirits

Urg'd them thro' all impediments and bounds,  
To force their way, and reach th' ascent of glory

*Arb.* Give me bat back my innocence, and take,  
Take all that pride and wantonness of pow'r,  
The tyranny that dwells with black ambition  
Can give to satisfy the thirsty appetite.  
Could I recal the guilt of yesterday,  
My peace of mind, which now is lost for ever,  
Would then return; and smiling happinefs  
(Its bleſſt attendant) with it.

*Mard.* Cursed whining!  
Henceforth, declaiming fool, preach to the winds,  
To raging billows, when the storm runs high:  
They will as soon regard, and hear thy moan,  
Know, from this moment, I as much despise,  
As e'er I lov'd thee. —— Haste thee to some cell,  
Some gloomy desert, there groan out thy soul,  
And howl thy life in agonies away.



## SCENE XI.

*Arbaces alone.*

Are these the wages? —— this the fit reward  
For so much guilt as I have waded thro'?  
It is. —— To be upbraided thus —— thus scorn'd,  
Contemn'd and set at naught —— ev'n by the  
villain

Who tempted first, and fullid my bright virtue!  
So when th' inveterate foes of human race,  
Those cursed spirits that seduce frail man,  
Have finish'd him in sin — with horrid taunts  
They gnash their teeth and laugh him to destruction.  
The king — Can I look up? — can I behold  
My injur'd master's face? —— Rather, thou earth,  
Open

Open at once, and let me quick descend,  
And herd myself among my fellow fiends.

## S C E N E XII.

*Amasis and Arbaces.*

*Ama.* Can life be worth preserving, when each thought  
Strikes dread and horror thro' the wounded mind !  
Whence then this diffidence and fear of death ?  
Why does reflecting on hereafter shake us,  
And make the hero dwindle to a coward ?  
Art thou *Arbaces* ?

*Arb.* Once, dread, I was.  
A faithful subject then.—But oh, the change !  
Loathsome deformity has crooked o'er,  
And quite effac'd the workmanship of heav'n,  
The stamp divine that mark'd me for a man.  
O I am fall'n ! debas'd ! sunk down into a monster.

*Ama.* Why tremble you ?—why shiver thus your joints ?  
Your smiting knees do clashing meet each other,  
As they were combatants prepar'd for war.

*Arb.* Why tremble you ?—think not these tears are feign'd,  
Or that they are the childish rain of women ;  
But springs of sorrow, flowing from a heart smitten with deep contrition for its crimes.  
Call forth the rack ; let pincers tear my limbs  
Till all my bones are sinewless and bare,  
I will not shrink, nor writh the steady looks,  
But groaning underneath this weight of guilt,  
I cannot bear my agonizing thoughts !  
Reflection deeper wounds me,

*Ama.* Art thou a villain then? or is thy brain  
Hurt, and distract'd? — If so, I envy thee:  
Tis not for crimes like mine; — I must endure  
The thorn of conscience, that ne'er-dying worm.

*Arb. Shame yet has stopp'd my tongue: else I  
had told thee  
The source of all thy woes: th' accursed cause.  
The villain that has heap'd destruction on thee,  
Prostrates himself, imploring your forgiveness.*

Arb. I will ; and when the bitter task is done,  
Hide me for ever from a world I loath.  
Your nephew, *Mardian*, whose ambitious thoughts  
Aim at your crown, long sought your sacred life :  
'Twas his infernal art that form'd the scheme  
Which has involv'd your royal house in ruin !  
He knew the prince's marriage ; yet with care,  
With all the arts of cursit dissimulation,  
Rais'd to the highest pitch your strong desires,  
To make your fall more certain and severe.  
The insurrection of the *Perian* slaves.

The insurrection of the Persian slaves,  
The sending prince *Pharnaces* to quell it;  
All was the dark, deliberated thought  
Of *Mardian*, *Nitas*, and (O shame to tell;  
Would I could blush to death —) the wretch

Arbaces !

*Ama. O villain! — secret, damn'd, remorseless  
villain!*  
O wretched state of monarchs! Why does heav'n,  
(Since'tis by'heav'n they reign) deny them prescience?  
Then they might look into the hearts of men;  
And there behold the seeds of vice and virtue:  
Yet immature, and growing in their breasts,  
And punish, or reward, as justice dictates.

*Arb.* If there a pow'r, a charm in language? no!  
There's none that can extenuate my crime.  
Yet hear me, sir, then spurn me from your presence.

He took me in the raging of my soul,  
 When all my thoughts were fury and despair ;  
*Pſammenitus* had giv'n away my love :  
 Reason was lost — that god-like principle,  
 The equal arbiter 'twixt right and wrong,  
 Had left her seat, and fury soon posseſt it.  
 Yet think me not so mean, nor fall'n so low,  
 To hope a pardon for my matchless crimes.  
 Empale me, — flea me, — bury me alive !  
 Plunge me in liquid fire ! then drag me out,  
 And place me underneath a mount of snow,  
 Till in alternate torments I expire.

*Ama.* No, thou ſhalt live — Life is thy proper  
 hell !  
 To die ! what is it but a free discharge  
 From all the mis'ries that oppreſs us here ?  
 'Tis to be loo'd from pain, from ſharp refection,  
 And all the train of terrors, that attend  
 And rack the sinful mind ! — Live, live, *Arbaces* ;  
 Were I a god, then ſhould'ſt thou be immortal,  
 And keep that vulture in thy breast for ever.

S C E N E XIII.

*Arbaces alone.*

He bids me live ? — 'tis ſure he ne'er can add.  
 A greater curse ; — unless I cannot die.  
 Immortal pow'rs ! who rule the ſtate above,  
 And view all human errors here on earth ;  
 O make not ſtrict enquiry for thoſe crimes  
 Miftaken man, with rawness does commit.  
 You made us thus imperfect ; and our ſouls  
 (Like childrens craving appetites) purſue  
 (When paſſions toss the mind,)

The first temptation that assaults the sense;  
 Religion, Reason, all are overborne,  
 'Till late repentance sets before the fight,  
 In glaring colours, our enormous ills.  
 Acquit me, then, for shortly I shall come  
 To take of you, my last, and my eternal doom. ]



## S C E N E XIV.

Mardian alone.

Curs'd State of Politicians, when in treason  
 The impotent and heartless must be join'd !  
 And mix with those brave spirits, who resolv'd,  
 And fearless would go through the mighty work,  
 'Till the concluding period makes all safe.  
 But such conspiracy, is thy frail fate,  
 So many diff'rent hands to raise the pile,  
 If but one stops, the fabrick sinks in ruin,  
 And crushes all that's near it with the fall.  
 This weak, religious fool ; this tim'rous wretch,  
 With his ill-tim'd repentance will undo  
 All I've been lab'ring at. — But here's the physick  
 Shall cure his sickly conscience with one dose. ]

[ *Swelling a Dagger.* ]

[ *A noise of treading heard within.*  
 Who's there ! — Deash ! am I jilted now ! curs'd  
 fortune ! ]

I shall be dragg'd to prison like a thief,  
 A petty, stabbing villain. — No 'tis he,  
 My friend, who comes to rid me of my fears.

S C E N E



## SCENE XV.

Enter to him a Ruffian.

*Mard.* Come hither, man; —— hast thou a soul  
that's firm,

Not to be shook —— intrepid —— that can dare  
To do an act shall raise thy grov'ling fame,  
And rank thee with the wealthy, and the proud;

*Ruff.* My 'lord, my fortune's desperate; and to  
mend it,

This execucing arm shall sheathe a sword  
E'en in the heart of majesty itself.

*Mard.* Why that's well said! thy conat'nace  
shews thee staunch.

See'st thou his dagger! —— thou know'st lord  
*Arbaces*?

He's in's apartment now, perhaps at prayess;  
(Why 'tis the fittest time to kill him then,  
Whilst yet the holy fit is warm upon him.)

[Speaks on to himself.] His chamber is remote from any  
other,

And easy of access; —— Plunge in his breast  
This well-try'd steel, and think thy fortune made.

*Ruff.* It shall be done, my Lord —— Remorse  
and pity

Are strangers to this heart. Whene'er they plead,  
I'm adamant: weeping I never knew;  
Nature has form'd me rough; and since stern fortune  
Denies me her best blessing (pow'r and riches)  
I wage eternal war with their possessors.

*Mard.* Be steady but in this; thy thirst of gold,  
Wer't thou made up of avarice itself,

Shall then be glutted. Here, receive the dagger :  
Be resolute. —— I'll wait here 'till 'tis over.

[He gives the dagger to the ruffian, who goes out.



## S C E N E XVI.

Mardian alone.

Well, this will do. Dead men, 'tis said,  
Do never blab ; — except their flitting ghosts,  
(As some dull moralists think) bursting from earth,  
Murm'ring and discontent, roam round the place  
Where their cold relicks moulder into dust,  
And with dire yellings fill the fearful ears  
Of cowards, fools, and madmen. —— But those  
fables

Are but the dreams of priests, to fright the rabble,  
And make 'em own the venerable cause  
Of heav'n, religion, and avenging gods.

This fellow stays ; —— I'm torn 'twixt hope and  
fear :

He could not miss his prey : —— 'twas hunsed  
down,

And one sure blow keeps him from rising more.

## S C E N E

## SCENE XVII.

*Ruffians enter to Mardian.*

*Mard.* Welcome, my friend, — I see thou hast  
been busy :

Is he secure ? — quite kill'd ! — for ever dead !  
Speak, and crown all my hopes at once.

*Ruff.* He is :

Behold this reeking dagger, 'tis yet warm  
With his life's blood. With stealing pace I crept,  
Where he was kneeling, with uplifted hands  
To deprecate the gods for his offences.  
But heav'n, my heart was going to recoil,  
And call me coward. But, 'twas a short fit,  
And I o'ercame it soon. I fear'd, he saw me,  
When his rear'd eyes darted their beams to heav'n :  
Just then I struck him, and he half pronounc'd,  
Mercy, great Jove — His spirit took its flight,  
And left his body lifeless on the floor.

*Mard.* Thou hast, at length, well paid me for  
those pains,  
Thy troublesome fears have made me suffer :  
He's dead, and I am safe — Take this, haste  
hence.  
Be secret; and secure me for thy friend.

[Gives the ruffian a purse.  
Let him to furies whine his tale of woe,  
Whilst I applaud the hand, that gave the blow.

(Exit)

*The End of the fourth A C T.*

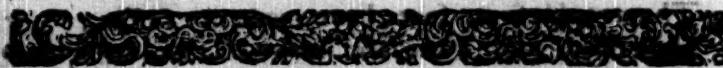
A C T.



## ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Mardian.

O ! now methinks I grasp a diadem..  
 My soul's sublim'd, and lifted to the  
 stars ;  
 The streams of dazzling glory break up.  
 on me,  
 As new-created light, illumin'd chaos.  
 Old Amasis seems quite bereft of reason ;  
 His son e'er long, no doubt, will find his shame.  
 What follows then but death must catch them both ?  
 Why, let them rest ! I'll o'er their ashes stride,  
 And mount myself into the regal seat !  
 How now ? the king — — — But I must man it out.



## SCENE IX.

Amasis and Mardian.

Ama. No place can give me rest. — — — within my  
 bosom  
 I carry hell : and all its store of horrors.

Mard.

Mard. (bowing.) My gracious lord, what mean  
those frantick words?  
And wherefore do you wear this face of sorrow?  
Ama. Thou steady villain, dar'st thou look erect?  
Or cast thy eyes up to yon azure heav'n?  
And not expect such vengeance for thy crimes,  
As suits the justice of affronted Jove?

Mard. Most sacred sir, wherein have I offended?  
Ama. Can impious man thus steel his harden'd  
breast,  
And make it proof 'gainst heav'n, artillery,  
Bidding defiance to the thund'rer's pow'r?  
Did you ne'er know to fear nor heav'n, nor hell?  
(looking steadfastly on Mardian.)

Mard. My liege! Sewing a concern.  
Ama. Hast thou no sense of guilt? or wer'st thou  
form'd  
Without that conscious witness which upbraids.  
And fills the soul with horror?

Mard. Guilt? my lord?  
Ama. May swift perdition catch thee; thou cool,  
base,  
Equivocating s'rknve! — know'st thou Arbaces? —  
That vile accomplice of thy hellish malice,  
Repenting, all his treason has confess'd.

Mard. Curse on his wavering soul, dull, wretched  
fool,  
To leave him but a moment! — now all's over,  
And I am caught, betray'd by my own folly.  
(aside.)

Despair, my lord, and fear of present death,  
Make wretches utter what they never meant;  
And often bleed the guiltless with the wicked,  
That I am innocent! just heav'n —

Ama. Be dumb for ever —  
Have I not found thee? vile, ungrateful traytor,  
Who wast that plotted with th' accursed Nitas,  
And rais'd rebellion in the dead of night? —  
Who set the captives free? —

Mard.

Mard.

*Mard.* I will not answer—  
Since curst, inconstant fortune has abus'd me;  
Know, I contemn thy power.—

*Ama.* Torments shall yet  
Make thee, thou wretch, confess and feel my justice.  
I that have nurst thee with my choicest love  
And heap'd my blessings with a bounteous hand;  
And to te thus repaid!— what cou'd ingage thee  
to it?

*Mard.* Since you will have it, sir, it was—  
Ambition.

Th' immortal thirst of heroes and of gods.  
I strove to climb the golden pinnacle,  
The very utmost point of human greatness:  
It was a crown I sought—to wield a scepter,  
And bid Plebeian slaves, at distance wait,  
And watch my awful nod: 'twas Egypt's crown.  
And to obtain that vast, that glorious prize,  
Honour and conscience (those exalted names  
Invented first by priests to cheat the world)  
To me seem'd nothing—nay, e'en life itself,  
For such a stake, a poor ignoble venture.

*Ama.* Amazement!— sure I dream!— now  
Amasis

Thou'rt fall'n indeed!—become the sport of slaves.  
What, hoa! who waits! a guard there! seize the  
traytor! (Enter a guard and seizes Mardian.  
Bear him this instant to the rack—invent  
Try all the ways that malice ever practis'd,  
To lengthen and improve the wretch's torture.

*Mard.* Yet, e'er I go—bear me, and then, farewell.  
Thou think'st this punishment: but, by the pow'rs,  
Those partial powers that blasted my designs,  
I wou'd not live, thus disappointed, robb'd,  
And cheated by the gods of all my hopes.  
My haughty soul disdains a second place;  
I wou'd be first: and, were I plac'd in heav'n,  
I'd war with mighty Jove to hurl his thunder.

*Ama.* Hence with the monster, he offends my  
sight! (He is carried off.)

S C E N E

## SCENE III.

Amafis alone.

O that this being won'd at once dissolve,  
And moulder into nothing! — that I cou'd  
Shake off this burthen, this huge load of life!  
The tyrant death sits on his dreary throne,  
Regardless of complaining mortals moan.  
His iron scepter waves in fullen state,  
Tho' thousands croud around his palace gate;  
He sternly sits, nor, till the fates decree  
Will loose the fetter'd soul, and set the captive free.

(Exit.)

## SCENE IV.

Enter Plammetitus.

Alone I wander thro' the court; each eye  
Startles at sight of me — the glittering presa  
Of strutting courtier, that were wont to wait,  
And catch my smiles, now shrugging shake their  
heads,  
And disappear when-e' they chance to cross me.  
What means this mute confession of my fate!

SCENE IV.

## SCENE V.

Psammenitus and Mariana.

*Psam.* Who's this! my wife— where hast thou  
been, my love? And wherefore do'st thou hide thee from the day?  
From me, who only live to gaze upon thee!  
Oh, thou fair flow'r— why droops thy lovely head?  
Why do'st thou sinking bend thee to the earth?  
A settl'd melancholly clouds thy face.  
And shades the beauteous lustre of thy eyes.

*Mir.* Art thou *Psammenitus*— surely that voice  
Was wont to cheer, and raise my soul to transports:  
Oh! when, when will the hours again return?  
The days of innocence, and spotless joys?  
But, 'twill not be—the vast, th' eternal bar  
That severs us, can never be remov'd.

*Psam.* What says my love? never return again?  
Recal that fatal, that heart-piercing word.  
I know you mourn my absence, *Miriana*;  
Last night was to have been an happy one.

*Mir.* Detested sound, it sets my frenzy'd brain  
On a new whirl! *Psammenitus*, no more;  
If you regard your *Miriana*'s peace.  
My thoughts will drive me into sure despair,  
If that comes o'er my mem'ry.—

*Psam.* Hush thy sorrows.—  
Let me speak peace to thy divided soul.  
A long successive train of rolling years  
Are yet to come, fill'd all with happiness:  
Henceforward shall my days, my hours, moments,  
Be wholly thine—to thee I'll all devote.  
The voice of war, the busines of the world

In vain shall call——Thus in each other's arms  
We'll live united, and united die.

*Mir.* Take heed, *Pammenitus*, thou'rt on the beach;  
The working storm is rising to devour thee;  
And thou, with me, must sink amid the billows,  
*Pammenitus!*——my heart is rent asunder.

*Psam.* What means my love?——oh, *Miriana*,  
speak!

*Mir.* I cannot speak, my lab'ring breast is full;  
But the big woe is quite unutterable!

*Psam.* Can there be felt a pain more exquisite  
Than thus to doubt, in intricacies caught?  
Yet know no end of the still-winding toil!  
Wilt thou not speak?——in thy chang'd face I read  
Some dreadful revolution of my fortune!

*Mir.* Dost thou?——and can you love me yet?  
ah, no!

You hate me, you that were so tender once,  
Behold me now, but as thy source of mis'ry.  
And yet my wretched fate wou'd sure draw tears,  
E'en from barbarity itself. [weeps.

*Psam.* Can I,  
Can I insensibly behold them flow?  
Ye powers, who delight in shewing mercy,  
O wherefore do ye visit so severely,  
And pour your wrath upon this innocent?  
If the warm transports of unguided youth  
Have e'er betray'd me into such a crime,  
As your forgiving goodness cannot pardon,  
Let me feel all your vengeance, but O Spare,  
Keep, keep this tender frame from violence.

*Mir.* *Pammenitus*, I wou'd—I wou'd speak out:  
Yes—I wou'd tell thee——what?——that we are  
ruin'd?

That sorrow and despair is all our portion?  
Is that what I would tell thee?——must the bride  
Greet her espous'd with grief——with shame and  
death?

Oh! let me sink at once, in the dark grave,  
Bury my woe, and hide me from the light.

[sinks into a chair.

*Psam.* Yet speak——e'er my conflicting passions  
have destroy'd me;  
I cannot bear this anarchy of thought.  
If angry Jove has arm'd his ready hand  
With his dread bolts, let them strike thro' at once,  
And end a wretched prince.

*Mir.* Then, we are ruin'd!——  
Call me no more, by the dear name of wife,  
For that chaste title has thy father sully'd.

*Psam.* My father! father faidst thou! heav'ns,  
where am I?

'Tis not in nature to sustain this blow;  
No human fortitude can ward it off:  
Give me, ye gods, of your omnipotence,  
Or strengthen me, or I shall sink before her.

*Mir.* Last night, O dire remembrance! must I  
think on it?

When the all-conscious eye of day was clos'd,  
And screening darkness aided the deceiver;  
Impatient of thy wish'd approach——quite tir'd,  
I sunk, at last, into a fatal slumber.  
No guardian angel whisper'd to my soul  
How near the precipice of ruin was;  
All heav'n forsook me, and th' incestuous tyrant  
Careless——embrac'd——

*Psam.* Stop——*Miriana*, stop.  
Let me not think upon that guilty scene,  
Lest I shou'd curse the author of my being.  
Think he no longer minds his own creation,  
But leaves to random chance th' affairs of men,  
That villainy may prosper; mourning virtue  
Be quite depress'd, and friendless in the world.

*Mir.* O! had there been but one friend to virtue  
left,  
One pitying god, he must have interpos'd,  
And snatch'd me from my fate: but I am stain'd,  
Polluted! my fair fame, that shou'd thro' ages  
Have roll'd with whiteness to succeeding times,  
Is blacker now than the dark *Ethiop's* visage.

*Psam.* Why did I 'soape when the pursuing sword  
Chas'd

Char'd me thro' the fields of slaughter and destruction?

Has heav'n preserv'd me, whilst on either side  
Thousands have fell a prey to rav'ous death,  
For this indiginity? my bed defil'd:

My father too, become the ravisher!

Where, ye immortal gods, where is your justice,  
When with impunity such crimes are acted?

*Mir.* Shall he unpunish'd go? shall he not feel  
Such agonies as rend my tortur'd brain?

Like me be frantick with his guilty thoughts?

Cou'd I but kill my mem'ry, bid that die,

All might be calm again; but to be thus,

Thus with imagination torn—give, give me death.

Yes, I will seek him: search the dreary cave

Where he lies hid. See! — he's already come.

How the thin spectres dance before my eyes.

Oh hide me from that phantom, 'tis too terrible,

I cannot bear it. Ha! 'twill surely catch me,

See, it fleets after me; I'll run and hide me from it.

[runs off.]



## SCENE VI.

*Psammenitus alone.*

She's gone—she's happy, grief has fix'd her brain.  
No more she'll feel the pangs, the curse of thinking.

Wou'd I were so—We're taught, indeed, to endure  
What heav'n's chastising hand shall lay upon us.

But, can it be, while this frail flesh confines us?

While the imprison'd soul participates

What's in weak companion undergoes?

E'er we can reach perfection, we must shake

The body off. Then the expanded soul

Pluming her wings, may take her airy way

Thro' yonder worlds of light, till she arrives

Where the eternal source of all inhabits,

F

And

And treads th' infinity of boundless space;  
 Our faculties enlarg'd, may, then, discern  
 The hid decrees of heav'n; nor shall we question  
 But all is fitting, reas'nable, and just.  
 But see, the spoiler comes that has undone me.



## SCENE VII.

Amasis and Psammenitus.

*Ama.* Confusion seizes me. Is that my son? —  
*Pba.* My heart is full, but I must speak. [aside.]  
 My father.

*Ama.* To call me by that soft endearing name  
 Is to proclaim me monster thro' the world.  
 Can't thou endure the sight of me? methinks  
 The *Basilisk*, that deadly foe to life,  
 Is less to be avoided than thy father.

*Psam.* There was a time, when you were th' only  
 joy,  
 The pride and pleasure of my wishing eyes;  
 T' embrace your knees, prostrate to pay my duty,  
 And to receive a blessing from my father,  
 Was once, the great ambition of *Psammenitus*.  
 But now the poinant injuries I feel  
 Rise in my soul, and sting me, e'en to madness;  
 Make me exchange the tender name of parent,  
 And curse thee for a tyrant, monster, ravisher!

*Ama.* 'Tis well, ye gods; yes, ye immortal pow'rs,  
 'Tis just, that my own offspring thus shou'd blast me.  
 Since I have pluck'd up nature by the roots,  
 And broke the chain of order,  
 Confusion, as the consequence, must follow:  
 Nor will I shrink, but bear and feel my mis'ry,  
 Till heav'n's vindictive hand shall scourge no more.  
 Go on then, son; on this devoted head

Pour all the curses, fury, and despair,  
Or frenzy can suggest.

*Psam.* Think on my wife !  
If thou'rt not dead to conscience, seal'd with guilt,  
Think on the violation of my bed ;  
Think on unnatural incest ; that's a sound  
Shall make thee shudder, till thy startling soul  
Shall beg of heav'n for its annihilation.

*Ama.* Bring not that image back to my remem-  
brance.

Was hell to gape, and open to the centre ;  
Were all the damn'd in terrible array  
To range themselves before me — loosen'd nature  
From its great axis to be quite unbind'd ;  
Did element on element make war,  
Till all shou'd in one general wreck be crush'd,  
It wou'd not daunt me, like that dreadful thought.

*Psam.* Art thou awaken'd ? — does it gall thee too ?  
By heav'n, 'tis well — then surely thou may'st guess  
What torments and despair thou'rt heasp'd on me.

*Ama.* I've plung'd thee into ruin — yes, my son,  
'Tis thus thy father's bounty does reward thee,  
For all thy soldier's toils — for all the blood  
Which thou hast lavish'd in thy country's service ;  
Strike then, it is but justice — strike — one blow  
Wou'd give thee vengeance, and rid me of pain.

*Psam.* What hast thou said ? Oh, thou hast quench'd  
my rage,  
Disarm'd me of my fury, with that word ;  
What, in my father's blood to bathe my hands ?  
Lave out the precious stream, that feeds the fountain  
Of my own life ? — Oh horrid, horrid thought !  
Thou might'st as well have bid me stab at Jove  
When the assembl'd gods are all in council.  
Still thou'rt my father — tho' thou hast undone me.  
Pardon the sallies of unguarded frenzy :  
Here let me kneel, here weep, till I'm forgiv'n.

*Ama.* (raising him.) Ha ! dost thou kneel ? — rise,  
or this sight will kill me.

Good

Good heav'n, what piety have I destroy'd?  
 What filial virtue has this madman ruin'd?  
 Oh, I have blasted quite the golden hopes  
 Of a whole people, on his looks they hung,  
 Taking a sore presage of halcyon days,  
 When I'm no more remember'd, swept away  
 To that dark land, where all things are forgotten.  
 Infernal lust, when thou possessest man,  
 Thou turn'st him to a wild, infatiate fury.  
 Oh had I not been lost, by heav'n abandon'd;  
 Cast reason and reflection quite behind me,  
 The fraudulent guile that lurk'd in *Mardian's* breast,  
 Like an abortive birth, in embryo stif'd,  
 Had never reach'd the light. —

*Psam. Mardian!* — I'm stunn'd —

*Ama.* His hellish arts prevail'd on weak *Arbaces*,  
 (Whom you incen'd, by giving to his rival,  
 The valiant *Pbocias* his belov'd *Mandane*)  
 And drew him to conspire his master's ruin.  
 Th' ungrateful *Nitas*, whom my bounty fed,  
 And rais'd from nothing; by that treach'rous villain  
 Was wrought to let the *Perfian* slaves escape:  
 The black rebellion that was rais'd last night,  
 Which sent you far from *Miriana's* arms;  
 When I, with raging lust and envy fir'd,  
 Fell in the traytor's snare;  
 All was the curst contrivance of that serpent,  
 Whose deadly sting lay hid within my botom,  
 Beneath the semblant shew of cordial love.  
*Arbaces*, whom remorse and anguish tortur'd,  
 Inform'd me of the whole.

*Psam. Pernicious slave!*

Oh ye avenging gods! with rapid force,  
 Dart on the traytor's head, thick-flashing light'ning,  
 Follow'd by thunder's all destroying rage,  
 And sweep this monster from the verge of earth.  
 Quick plunge him down into the lowest hell,  
 That he may feel immortal agonies,  
 And groan out an eternity in anguish.

*Ama.* E'er this he has receiv'd the dire reward

Of all his treasons, if the rack can give it.

*Psam.* Henceforth, let none in friendship e'er  
confide;

The bond of gratitude, of trust, and faith,  
Is broken now, and ne'er again can close.

*Ama.* Come near, *Psammenitus*, my dissolution  
Approaches swiftly—I shall soon be gone.  
Yet, e'er I die, let me embrace thee, prince,  
And ask forgiveness of the gods and you.

*Psam.* Help ho! great *Amasis* expires this moment.  
My emperor—my father—oh look up,  
And bless your wretched offspring!



### SCENE VIII.

*Amasis, Psammenitus, and Phanes.*

*Ama.* Oh, my son!

*Psam.* Support him gently, *Phanes*.—How con-  
vuls'd

The manly features are!—his deaden'd eyes,  
That darted rays of majesty around,  
Are sinking in their sockets.

*Pba.* What means this?

Death in triumphant state reigns all around us.  
Ent'reng but now, the apartment of *Arbaces*,  
My eyes encounter'd such a dreadful sight  
As struck me chill with horror!—In his blood  
Lifeless he welt'reng lay—his half cloi'd eyes  
Star'd ghastly, dead and motionless upon me:  
I search'd the chamber, but cou'd find no weapon,  
Which makes it seem, as if some ruffian hand  
Bereft him of his life.

*Ama.* He is at peace.

Th' enquiring hand of heav'n, that searches out  
Th' offences of mankind, found him attouing

(By strictest penitence) for all his crimes.  
Can you forgive me yet, *Psammenitus*?

My soul will droop, and hang its heavy wing,  
Nor can I face th' all judging pow'r above,  
Till your according goodness seals my pardon.

*Psam.* May heav'n befriend my soul, at my last  
gasp,

As I forgive my dying king and father.

*Ama.* *Psammenitus*, I thank thee—mercy, heav'n!  
(dies.)

*Psam.* Dead, *Amafis*? well hast thou led the way;  
And lo, I follow thee! (offers to stab himself.)

*Pba.* Hold, frantick prince.

Death has already had too large a feast:

Why shou'd we gorge him then?

*Psam.* Who can bear life

Encompas'd with irreparable evils?

My friend, who had my soul within his bosom,

In whom I trusted, basely has betray'd me:

My father dead of mere remorse and shame;

And to sum up the total of my mis'ries,

That which devours and swallows up the rest;

My wife, e'er I had tasted bymen's joys,

Ravish'd—destroy'd—distain'd by brutal lust.

What comfort have I left me now but vengeance?

Yes, I will glut my eyes with *Mardian's* pangs;

His painful groans, like musick, will refresh me;

His dying agonies shall make me smile.

### S C E N E IX.

*Psammenitus, Phanes, and Sethon.*

*Pba.* See *Sethon*, who attended his last hours.  
By this, my lord, the wretch must be no more.

*Seth.* How far does man extend his monst'rous  
crimes,

Loos'd from religion's guidance and restraint?

The shocking imag'ry will ever dwell,  
And fix itself upon my trembling soul.  
But oft 'tis seen, the insolent offender,  
Tho' boldly impious in the days of health,  
When justice dooms him, spiritless, and sunk,  
He perisheth, without regard or pity.

*Psam.* Is then the villain dead? —

*Sesb.* He is, my lord. —

And at th' approach of death, despair and anguish  
Seiz'd, like a sudden earthquake, all his frame.  
His trembling limbs confess his inward horror.  
That supercilious port; that haughty mien  
Which once distinguish'd him, and swell'd his pride  
Above the proudest of the sons of men;  
Had now forsook him, and to fell remorse,  
And conscious guilt, he seem'd a wretched prey.

*Psam.* Well, with his dust I war not—let him rest.  
Ha! who comes here? O strange and dreadful sight!  
Do I yet bear this loathsome life about me?  
Or wander in dark caverns underneath,  
And meet the gliding ghost of *Miriana*?



### S C E N E the Last.

*Miriana* enters, to them distract'd, attended by her  
women.

*Mir.* Hark! — he'll come — but soft be sure —  
He'll make no noise!  
Let not the King know of our marriage, *Iras*.  
Oh thou dear loit'rer! wherefore do you stay?  
See! look! our bridal bed's adorn'd with white,  
Pure as our innocence — what — *Amasis*!  
Rape! murder! rape! where, where? *Psammenitus*?  
Oh! are you come at last. — I'll hug you close;  
And well revenge me for this tedious absence.

[*Throws her arms about his neck.*

*Psam.* Oh my soul's only comfort — let me ease,  
Let this embrace heal thy dis temper'd mind.

*Mir.* O shelter me, save, save me from the ravisher !  
 Snatch him, ye furies, instant from my sight.  
 Tear him to pieces.—Drag him to your dens.  
 He's gone—away—off—let me follow him,  
 That I may rouse the furies to revenge  
 And heap fresh horrors on his tortur'd spirit.

*Pba.* Kind heav'n grant ease to her afflicted soul.

*Psam.* She's going, friend—the fire of life is spent.

*Mir.* Oh my lov'd lord—she hand of death has  
 seiz'd me.

Yet let not my pollutions blot me quite  
 From thy dear memory.—Stain'd as I am ;  
 Heav'n knows my unconsenting soul is free ;  
 'Twas rapt with thine—till *Mardian*'s impious arts  
 Divided us—farewell—*Pammenitus*—  
 A dreadful gloom has spread itself around,  
 My eyes are darken'd, now—their light is out. [dies.]

*Psam.* She's dead, alas ! the sun of beauty's set :  
 And now the world, to me, is one dark vale ;  
 Where I have long, bewilder'd, lost my way,  
 And sought the paths of happiness in vain.

*Setb.* O prince, these heavy, these severe afflictions  
 Wou'd tempt us to arraign the laws of providence,  
 And tax the justice of th' eternal gods.  
 But, as pure gold is purg'd of its alloy,  
 And comes out brighter from the searching fire ;  
 So virtue shines with most resplendent lustre  
 Surrounded with misfortunes and calamities.

*Psam.* I weep not, *Setbon* ; yet I cannot boast  
 With Stoicks, an insensibility.  
 He must be surely more, or less, than man,  
 That can endure, without severest pangs,  
 And poignant agonies, such mortal sorrows.  
 But heav'n's inscrutable in all its ways !  
 And human knowledge never can explore  
 The dispensations of eternal pow'r :  
 If you with peace and pleasure wou'd be crown'd,  
 Let ev'ry passion keep its destin'd bound ;  
 For virtue's thorny path will ever safe be found. }